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JUNE 2024 ISSUE 64

MUSIC

ROCK ON!

ICONIC BANDS GUNS N' ROSES AND AC/DC

P. 60

FITNESS

THE POWER COUPLE

HIP THRUSTS & DEADLIFT GAINS

P. 18

INTRODUCING...

Sara KOVA

THE BRAINY BADASS MAKES HER *MAXIM* DEBUT

P. 26

+

CRIME: AUSSIE GANGS

FILM: MMA LEGEND BEC RAWLINGS

SEX: PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER

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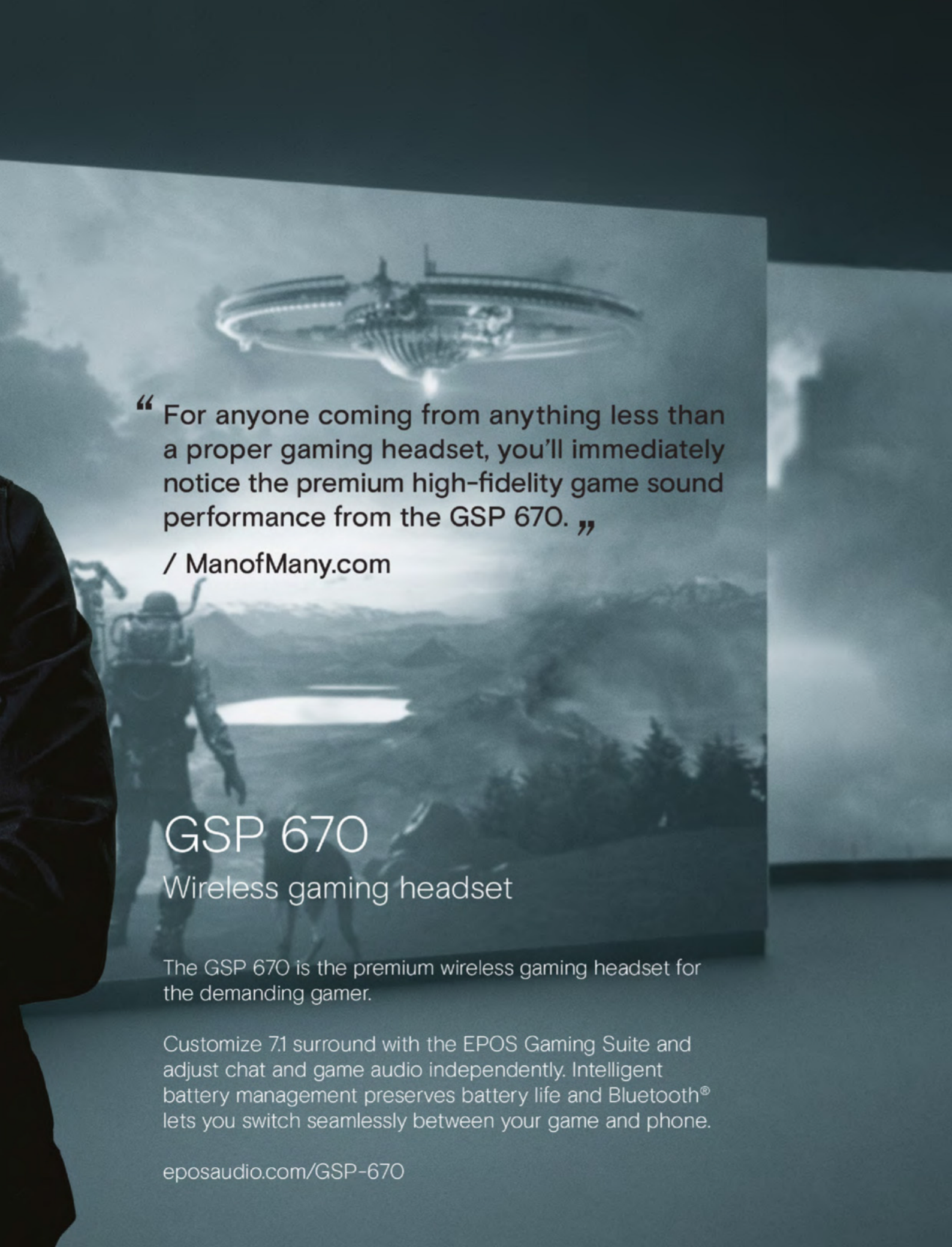

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CONTENTS

ISSUE 64 — JUNE 2024

10 MACHINES

18 FITNESS

26 COVER GIRL

36 TRUE CRIME

42 MAXIM FLASHBACK

48 FILM

52 MENTAL HEALTH

54 WOMAN OF THE WORLD

60 MUSIC

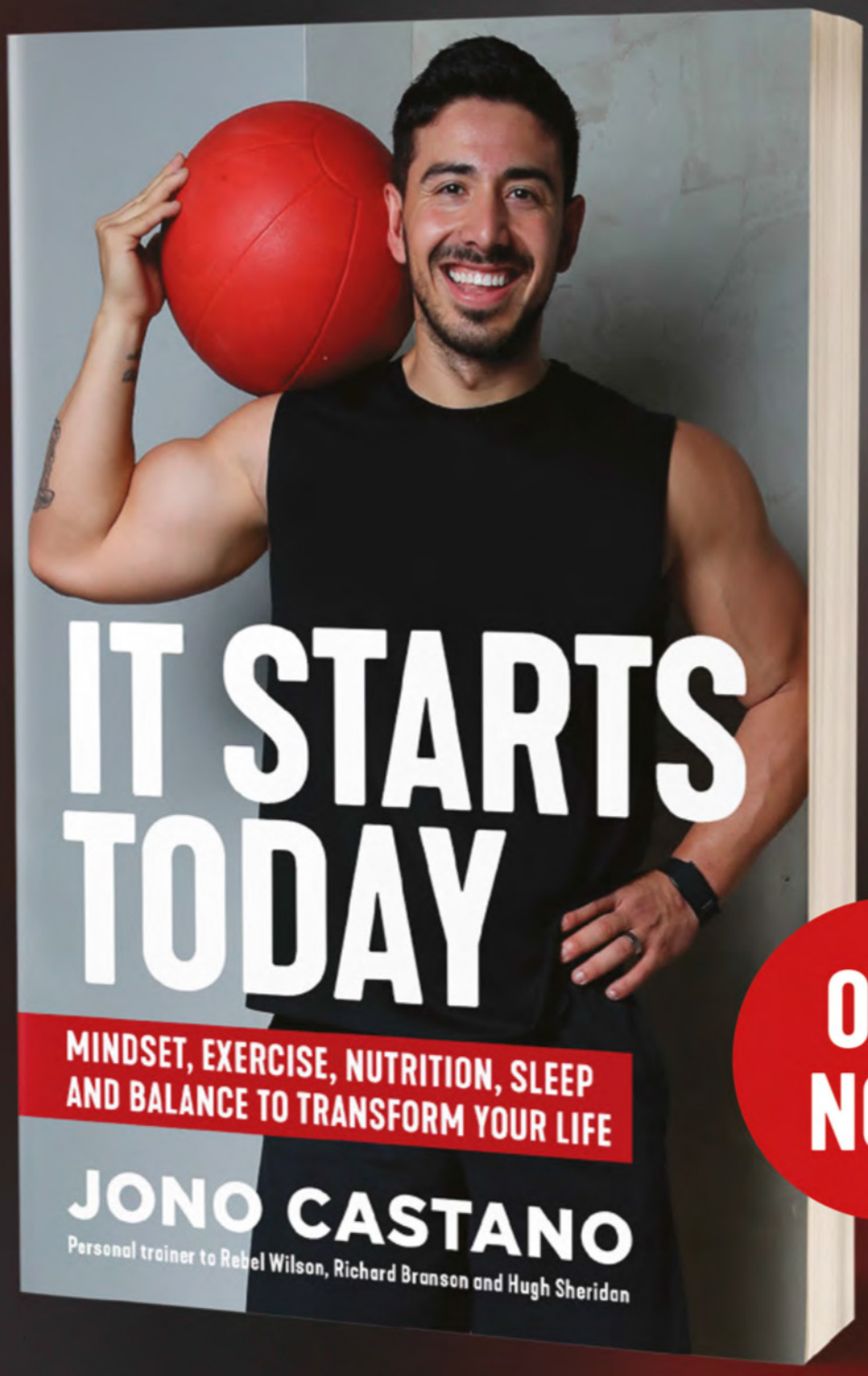
72 SEX

74 GIRL NEXT DOOR

80 MAXIM AUSTRALIA/NZ OFFICIAL WOMEN OF THE WORLD 2024 CALENDAR

82 24 HOURS TO LIVE

DON'T WAIT FOR TOMORROW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MAXIM

NEW ZEALAND

FRONT COVER

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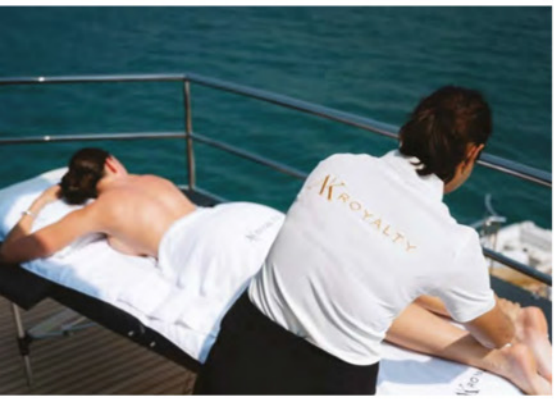


THE GOLD

Meet the yacht with a Midas touch and matching jet skis...

When the oceans are a sea of white yachts, the gold exterior of the AK Royalty yacht is a welcome distraction. Built in 2009, this blingiest of boats has been given the business by Aussie Aaron Fidler, former chief engineer, now superyacht owner.

Mainly painted gold to match his Lamborghini, the yacht ports in Dubai, where he spent a year upgrading it. A big chunk of the multi-million dollar refit focused on paint with 24 karat gold dust to ensure it resonates under the sun - months to perfect but worth it.

Unlike the attention seeking exterior, the interior focuses on cozy ambience where dining, dancing, and relaxation take place on one level - so guests aren't being anti social. The refurbished interior is maxed out with imported marble surfaces, Fendi carpets, and gold-tinted mirrors. In the master suite, mirrored ceilings feature, along with a transparent bathtub and steam shower with sauna. The crew of eight include a qualified lawyer and doctor, two diving instructors, free

STANDARD

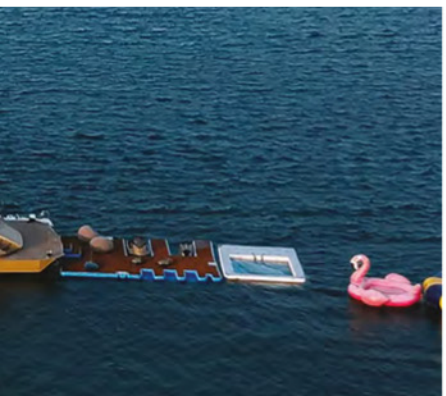
By BILL VARETIMIDIS

divers, IT engineers, professional fishermen and a pilot. All are qualified captains, which ensures the boat will always return home in the case of sickness or pirate invasion.

Needing to impress his Dubai neighbours, Fidler went all out with the toys, including an inflatable slide, a massive 12 person trampoline, and a must-have giant inflatable flamingo. Of course, seabobs and gold jetskis are always at the ready.

Last but never least, the engineering systems and generators were upgraded to boost top speed to 65 km/h. The cruising speed of 28 km/h is 7 km faster than similar yachts, while zero-speed stabilisers ensures the boat stays steady and the guests stay tip happy.

As the gold star party boat, there is an outdoor movie theatre, a six person Jacuzzi on the sun deck, and a DJ booth that expands for outdoor nightclub vibes. There's even a DJ who flies in on request – so extra we love it. ■



Ducati for the Distinguished

Match your Bentley to your motorcycle with the ultimate status symbol for wealthy...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS

DUCATI DIAVEL BY BENTLEY

ENGINE: 1158cc liquid cooled V4 Granturismo
TRANSMISSION: 6 speed quick shift chain
POWER: 124 kW
TORQUE: 93 lb-ft @ 7500 rpm
DRY WEIGHT: 211 kg
SEAT HEIGHT: 790 mm
FUEL CAPACITY: 20 litres
PRICE: $94,800

A Bentley-inspired Ducati is the combination you never knew you wanted. The car in question is the $2 million Batur coupe - the last of Bentley's internal combustion models. Just 18 will be made, and to celebrate, Ducati is building 550 motorcycles with strict design directives based on the Bentley Batur.

If it sounds a little random, remember Ducati is a subsidiary of Lamborghini, which is a part of Audi. Audi is part of the VW group, which also includes Bentley. Feel better? Just like the 2020 Diavel 1260 Lambo and the 2022 Streetfighter V4 Lambo before it, the Ducati Diavel by Bentley will have visual tweaks beyond the paint and add-ons.

Other Batur elements include redesigned air intakes, the two tone grille with red mesh; and the seat, a black Alcantara saddle with more hints of red. Every part that isn't smothered in Bentley Scarab Green is left bare - with carbon fibre. Even the exhaust is a Bentley borrow and the aluminum wheels have the same spoke pattern.

Make no mistake, with 124 kW from the 1.2 litre V4 Granturismo engine, this bike is a weapon before any Batur touches. Good thing then that all mechanical parts, including the engine, suspension, brakes, and electronics, are identical to the standard Diavel V4.

A total of 500 standard examples will be built, with an additional 50 set aside for Bentley Mulliner customers, who will be able to customise their bikes to match their cars, yachts, and private jets. Coming with a certificate of authenticity and plaque to prove you're a baller, there's also matching clothing available including a helmet and jacket – but no socks yet. Last year's Streetfighter V4 Lamborghini models were sold out in hours, so expect the Ducati and Bentley faithful to set some new records – in minutes.

Pure Excess

From track to street, Pagani unleashes the convertible Imola Roadster...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS

PAGANI IMOLA ROADSTER

ENGINE: 6.0 litre twin turbo V12
TRANSMISSION: Seven speed sequential AMT
POWER: 625 kW
TORQUE: 811 lb-ft @ 5600 rpm
TOP SPEED: 349 km/h
0-100 KM/H: 2.8 seconds
PRICE: $6 million + (est)

Pagani just revealed its latest creation to the world and surprising to absolutely no one, it slaps. Named the Imola Roadster, it's the convertible version of the Imola and more - continuing a high performance, high octane legacy.

Paying tribute to the Italian racetrack at Imola, the Imola coupe first rolled out in 2020. Now, Pagani want to combine the track performance of that car, with the open-air rush and technology the Huayra Roadster BC brings.

If the Huayra R was your jam, the Imola Roadster will hit your sweet spot; it's essentially a Roadster BC with all the R bits attached - and it's road ready so you can drive it without any pitlane restrictions.

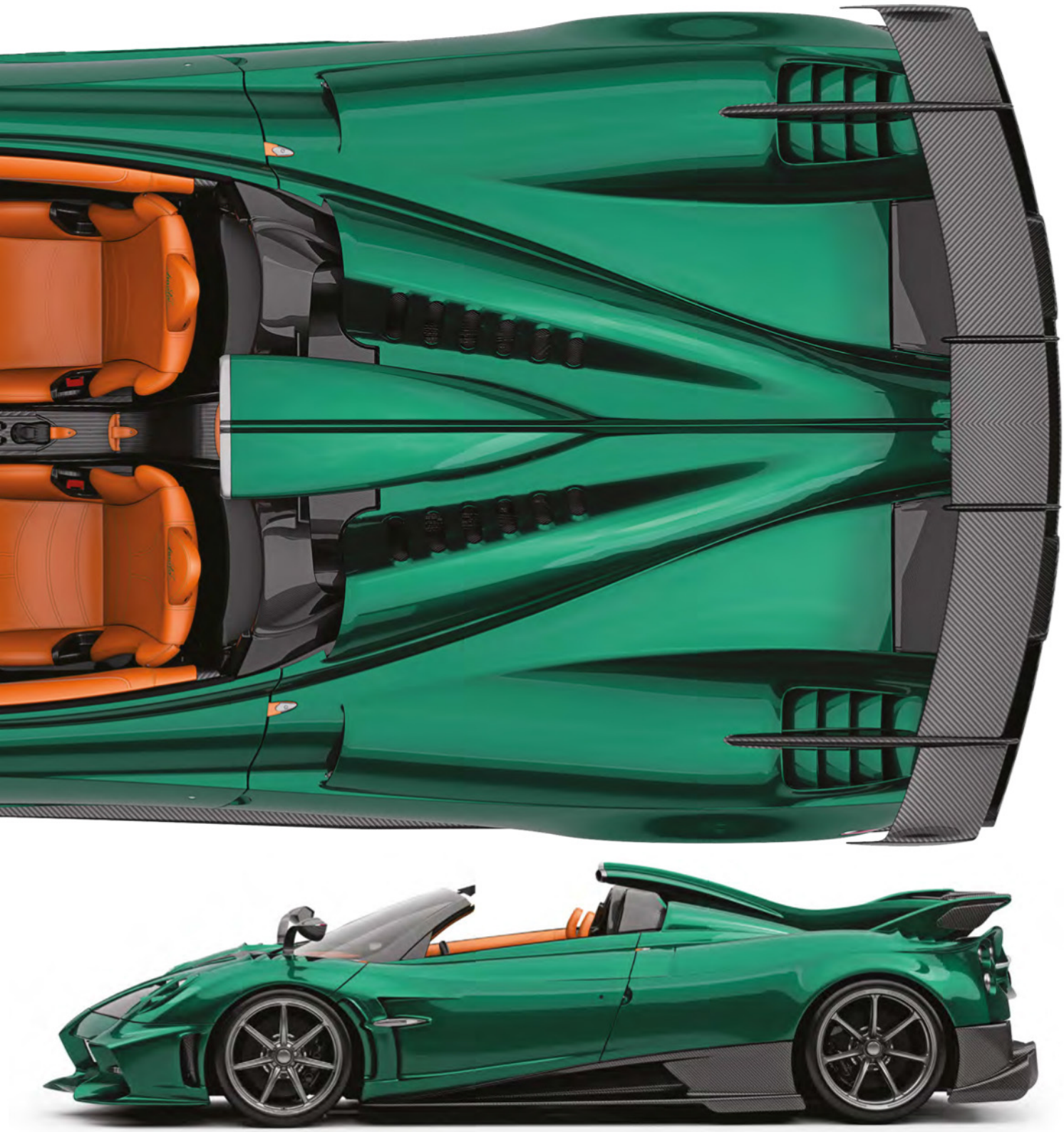
With 811 lb ft of torque now available on request at 5,600 rpm, it's the best performing open topper the brand has built. Power from the AMG sourced twin turbo V12 has been increased to 625 kW, ensuring it goes from nought to naughty before you can blink.

The large front intakes and the unique roof scoop ensure 600 kg of downforce at 280 km/h - at the very least. For being such a downforce-generating monster, Pagani added four highly sophisticated flaps for active aero assistance, and installed intelligent suspension to help it squat, drop, and roll all rally-like.

With the fanboy favourite six-pipe titanium exhaust still prominent, the new tail lights with vents extract heat from the wheel arches, icing the brakes while also generating downforce over the wheels, for ultimate grab and go.

Inside, this Imola impresses with Carbo wood trim, embossed leather, and a carbon fibre seat with four point harness. Limited to eight machines worldwide, the cost for this ultimate in excess will easily run into the millions, so unless you're Jeff Bezos reading this - not in this lifetime. ■

The large front intakes and the unique roof scoop ensure ***600 kg of downforce at 280 km/h*** *– at the very least.*



MOVE OVER F1

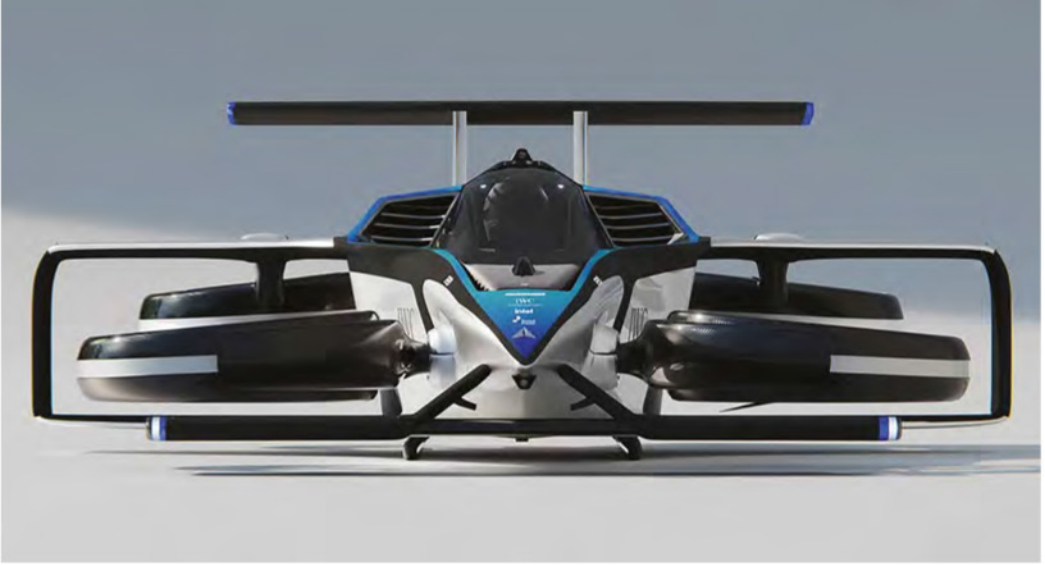
Flying cars for the masses? Not yet, but the Airspeeder MK4 racecar is a glimpse into the future...

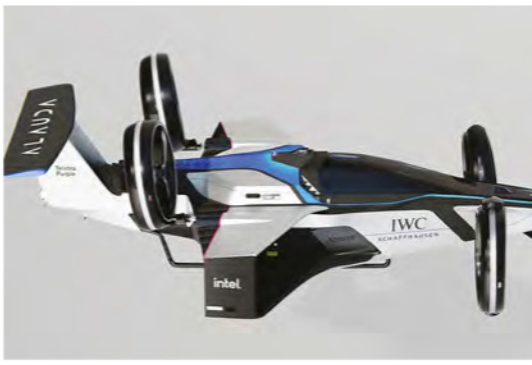
By BILL VARETIMIDIS

With technology progressing faster than we can upgrade, and companies desperate to be the next Tesla, having flying cars as the norm transportation may happen sooner that we expect - but Adelaide-based Alauda Aeronautics wants to get there yesterday.

The company's latest creation, the Airspeeder MK4, is a hydrogen-powered crew-manned flying racecar set to premiere at the 2024 Airspeeder Racing Series. It holds the current record for being the fastest hydrogen-powered eVTOL ever built - so it's no poser.

More than your average eVTOL, it shares many similarities with Formula 1 machines. The aerodynamic form is almost identical, with a carbon fibre monocoque in between the front and rear wings, and a single seat cockpit in between them. The pit crew for the MK4 is much faster though – as there are no



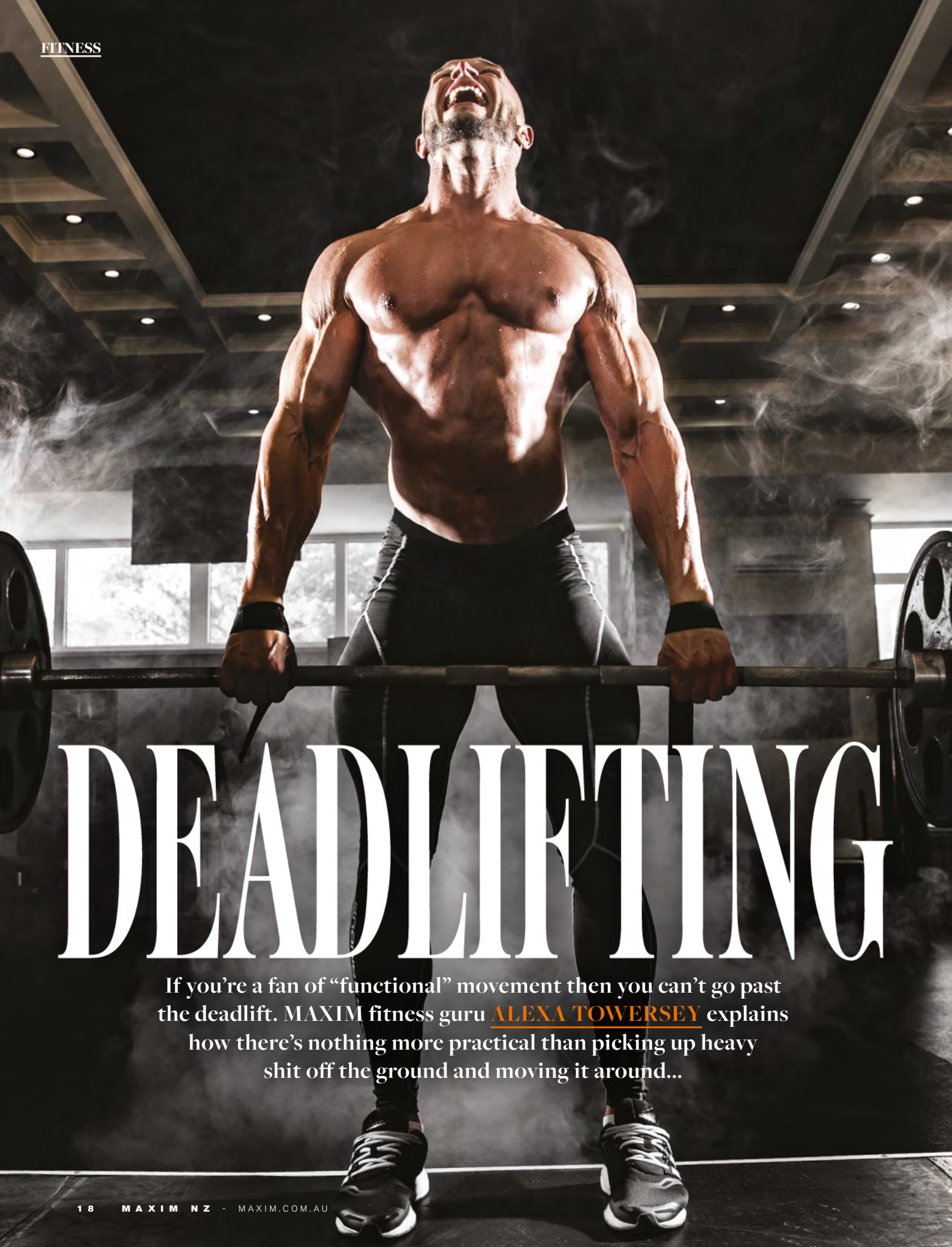


tyres to change. Where those wheels would normally be, sit four repositionable propellers. The onboard A.I. flight controller and gimballed thrust system allow it to manouevre with all of the handling qualities of a F1 car, albeit in the sky and without tyres and the other stuff.

Providing go is the Thunderstrike Hydrogen Turbogenerator, a 1000 kW turbogenerator electric engine designed exclusively for eVTOLs like this one. It provides a monster range of 300 kilometres and allows it to reach top speeds of 360 km/h in 30 seconds.

The earlier model MK3 has successfully completed over 350 remote controlled test flights, and also showed off in two Airspeeder demo races in South Australia. Now the company is set to have the new MK4 step up to the first-ever Airspeeder Racing Series next year, the first-ever manned flying car race similar to *Star Wars* pod racing.

That's all very cool and all – but when will they be available to the masses for individual travel to and from the shops? ■



DEADLIFTING

If you're a fan of "functional" movement then you can't go past the deadlift. MAXIM fitness guru ALEXA TOWERSEY explains how there's nothing more practical than picking up heavy shit off the ground and moving it around...

BEATING A DEADLIFT PLATEAU: THE BOTTOM LINE

The deadlift can build extraordinary strength and size, but it's also a great diagnostic tool. It can tell you what you need to work on and which exercises to use in your program. It can also tell you what muscles or range of motion need to be the focus of your program to ensure continual progress. Here are my top tips for pulling more, pulling harder and pulling safer (chicks not included).

Plateau Buster #1:

THE SET-UP

Many of the lifts you make or miss are determined before you actually move the bar. If your set-up sucks, it's going to dictate the rest of your movement. Don't just bend over, grab the bar and lift. Your aim should be to OWN the bar.

TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF: Lifting barefoot allows you to "feel the floor" and more effectively engage the posterior chain. Create a tripod with even weight underneath the big toe, little toe and heel. Screw your feet into the ground and then rip the floor apart – this improves the rotational torque through the hips and helps stabilise the lower back.

FULL BODY TENSION: Getting and maintaining tension is crucial for a big deadlift. Lock in the upper back and the lats. Use the barbell as a counterbalance to get the chest up and weight back in the heels and then "make the barbell click". There should be no slack in the body from the hands to the heels. The harder you squeeze the bar, the more you cue your CNS.

TOP TIP:
PROTECT YOUR ARMPITS
Getting the lats to fire is a game changer for a big deadlift. The latissimus dorsi is the body's largest back muscle with attachments at the humerus, scapulae, rib cage, and pelvis. It provides a ton of stability to the spine during heavy loading. If you struggle to keep the tension in your lats and upper back, try popping a couple of towels in the armpits and squeezing them. If you lose the towel, you've lost the tension.

Plateau Buster #2:

TECHNICAL TROUBLESHOOTING

Once you've nailed your set-up and basic technique, you can start looking at your lift from a bodypart perspective. Figure out which muscle group(s) are weak, strengthen them and then watch the primary lift go up!

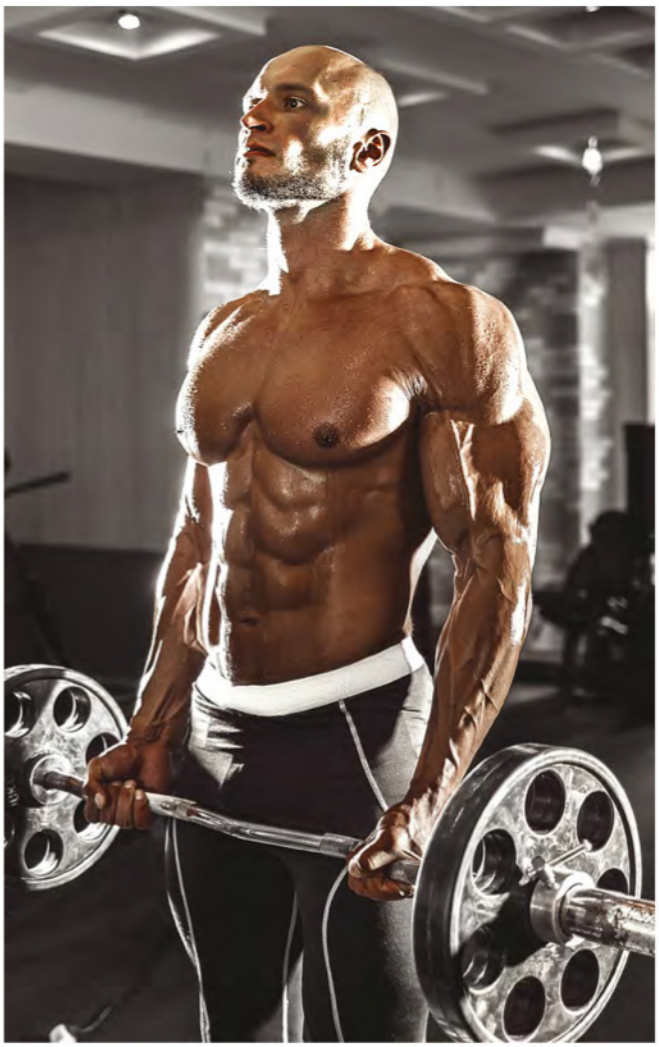
PROBLEM 1 — WEIGHT SHIFTS FORWARD: If the weight shifts at the beginning of the lift, it's most likely weak hamstrings or tight hip flexors. Try strengthening your hamstrings in the lengthened position and work on hip flexor elasticity – suggested exercises would be Toes Elevated Romanian Deadlift, Reverse Hypers, Toes Elevated Standing Good Mornings and Long Stride Walking Lunges. If your weight shifts mid-range, it's most likely the lats that are weak, making you unable to keep the bar close. Try including exercises that strengthen the lats in their shoulder extension function — snatch grip deadlifts, DB Pull Overs, Straight Arm Pulldowns, Sweeping Deadlifts with a front loaded resistance band. If the weight shift happens at the top of the lift, chances are your glutes need some extra attention in their hip extension function through hip thrusts, glute bridges, band resisted Romanian deadlifts (band around waist) and cable or band pull throughs.

PROBLEM 2 – WEAK OFF THE FLOOR: This could be an issue of inadequate core rigidity. You can't stay tight enough and lose force-transfer into the bar. Learn how to belly breathe to create intra abdominal pressure and increase the strength of your abs and lower back by using exercises like the Zercher Carry, Farmers Walk, Loaded Plank and Back Extension.

TOP TIP: WEIGHT BELT
For more advanced lifters, a weight belt is an effective tool that works by giving the muscles around the spine something to contract against, so that they can produce a harder isometric contraction. This means heavier lifts, and more strength gains.

PROBLEM 3 – LOSING THE BAR: A weaker grip leads to less force transfer to the bar, which will limit the amount of weight you can move. Use a double overhand grip for as long as you can. Once grip becomes a limiting factor, switch to a mixed grip, and alternate each set. Adding in supplementals like Dead Hangs, Loaded Carries and Pinch Grip Holds will help.

TOP TIP: STRAP IT UP
Grip-centric exercises are harder on the Central Nervous System (CNS). Using straps when deadlifting decreases the neural demand of the lift, allowing you to do more volume and ramp up the frequency, both of which are important for muscle growth.



Plateau Buster #3:

THE SPEED-STRENGTH PERSPECTIVE

Once you achieve an intermediate level of strength, you need to have an understanding of what kind of lifter you are. Are you an explosive speed freak or a brute strength kind of guy where you grind the weight up? From here it's relatively simple – train what's weak and you'll become strong. If you're a grinder – think about including speed work. And if you're already quick, then focus on adding weight consistently to the bar.

TOP TIP: UNF—K YOUR HEAD
Where your mind goes, your body will follow so visualising a successful lift can be helpful. If you approach the bar like it's heavy, it will be.

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THRUST *Into Action*

If you 're not doing Hip Thrusts, you 're missing out on some serious gains. ALEXA TOWERSEY explains how you don 't get the butt you want by sitting on it...

Talk to any power athlete and ask him what muscles you need to be really big and strong all over, and guaranteed you'll find the most common answer is "back". It's responsible for picking up a barbell and supporting a heavy squat. Second on that list should be glutes. If you've got a strong back and a powerful posterior sitting underneath it, not only are you going to be capable of lifting some heavy-arse weights and safeguarding against hip and knee injuries, but you're going to look like you belong in the boudoir.

Here's what you need to know...

The Hip Thrust is a glute exercise designed to improve your strength, speed and power by teaching optimal hip extension. The glutes are designed to extend the hip or pull the leg behind the body. If your glutes are underdeveloped, your speed, power and strength are all compromised. That means you'll have weaker Squats and Deadlifts as well as slower 100m sprint times and lower vertical jumps than you could have otherwise. In my experience hip thrusts do the best job of building the booty — they're easy to learn and research has shown they can improve your squat indirectly by up to 30% — and they're well tolerated by the vast majority of lifters. Your goal should be to do 10 reps with at least 1.5 x your bodyweight. There are six main ways to alter this movement:

1. **LOADING:** You can use just your own bodyweight or load the movement with kettlebells, barbells, bands, dumbbells and/or chains.
2. **REP STYLES:** You can use paused reps, constant tension reps, rest-pause reps, clusters, speed reps, iso-holds, eccentric-accentuated or 1.5 reps.
3. **LIMB NUMBER:** Double leg, single leg or alternating.
4. **PELVIC ACTION:** Stable neutral pelvis or posterior pelvic tilt action.
5. **BACK POSITION ON THE BENCH:** Bench under the scapulae or bench at mid-back.
6. **FOOT ELEVATION:** Feet on floor or feet elevated onto box.

There are 1,728 technical variations of the hip thrust, but I suggest sticking to barbell, banded and single leg variations. Building the glutes isn't about going as heavy as possible as soon as possible, it's about "feeling" the muscle work.

You can do anywhere from one to four days per week. If you do one day, then pyramid your sets and aim for volume; if you do four days then two sets per day is enough. I like three days per week – one heavy and low rep barbell session (5 x 5), one medium rep, single leg session (4 x 8) and one high rep, barbell or banded session (3 x 15-30).

If you struggle to activate your glutes in other compound movements like squats, you can program hip thrusts first to ensure they're engaged more effectively first, or you can finish each lower body session with a set to failure so you're guaranteed to walk out of the gym like The Rock.

TOP TIP:
The top of the ROM (range of motion) for hip thrusts is the hardest portion, and lifters usually skimp on this when they rep out to failure. I like to encourage a 10-second isometric hold on the last rep of each set. Here's a simple program you can try on for size:

WORKOUT 1:
A1. 5 x 5 Heavy Barbell Hip Thrusts. 60-90 secs rest between.
B1. 4 x 10 Back Squat — 60 secs rest between.
C1. 3 x 12 Romanian Deadlift — 45 secs rest between.

WORKOUT 2:
A1. 4 x 8 Single Leg Paused Hip Thrust (pause for 3 secs at the top of the movement).
B1. 5 x 6 Sumo Deadlift.
B2. 5 x 60 secs RKC Plank. Focus on squeezing the glutes. 60 to 90 secs rest before repeating B1.

WORKOUT 3:
A1. 4 x 20 Feet Elevated Glute Bridge. 45 to 60 secs rest between.
B1. 4 x 10 Goblet Squat.
B2. 4 x 45 secs Reverse Hyper Hold off bench or Sorenson hold off Back Extension machine. 60 secs rest between.

HOW TO THRUST SAFELY

An imperfect setup in terms of bench height, foot placement, pelvic stability and core stability all integrated into a heavy loaded movement can cause more unwanted movement at the lumbar spine. If you can control the tension and stability of the hips, pelvis and core together, this movement is not only a great way to train the hips with serious load into extension but can also be a staple of a lower-back friendly program.

1. The back hinges on the bench at the line that's just beneath your shoulder blades.
2. Set up with a medium to wide stance — for maximal glute activation you need slight external rotation of the hips so turn your feet out slightly.
3. Push through your heels, not your toes. Heels = posterior chain.
4. Make sure you reach full hip extension. If you can't lock out the hips then you 're going too heavy.
5. Your shins should be fairly vertical when at the top of the movement and the knees should track over the toes — do not allow the knees to cave. Pop a band around your knees as a tactile cue.
6. Make sure your ribcage is kept down to prevent flaring. This will ensure that your lumbar spine doesn't hyperextend and your pelvis doesn't anteriorly tilt – you need to make sure it's your glutes doing the work and not your lower back.
7. Reps can be brought all the way to the ground and reset or reversed in mid-air without touching down. If you feel the movement primarily in your quads, shorten your range. ■

TOP TIP:
If you find you experience any lower back pain, try keeping a posterior pelvic tilt throughout.

ABOUT ALEXA

"Action Alexa" is an internationally published celebrity trainer, sports model and nutrition and lifestyle coach with over 15 years' experience in the health and fitness industry, and has worked with NZ's world champion rugby team, the All Blacks. She has qualified for the Ironman 70.3 World Champs and was named as one of the Five Toughest Trainers in Asia during her seven-year stint in an MMA gym in Hong Kong.

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SARA KO

Buckle up for a wild ride with this brainy bombshell who rocks lingerie like Rihanna .

Photography by ARTHUR ST. JOHN @ARTHURSTJOHN

Styling by JOSHUA BAILEY @JBAILEYNYC

Hi Sara, and congrats on your *MAXIM* NZ cover! Tell us a bit about your shoot
We shot in spring 2024 at an oceanfront estate, with stunning views of the Pacific Palisades. We wanted to capture a sensual/romantic look that's both natural and sexy at the same time. This location is also where Rihanna shot her famous Vogue cover.

Have you ever been to New Zealand?
No I still haven't had the opportunity to visit New Zealand. I love to travel and experience new cultures. New Zealand is definitely on my bucket list for 2024.

Where in NZ would you like to visit?
I would like to visit the South Island to hike through its breathtaking landscapes and experience its massive and unique wildlife.

When do you feel sexy and why?
I feel sexy all the time! But I feel the most sexy when I'm all glammed up with hair and make-up done, wearing high heels and lingerie. I love how lingerie is suggestive and shows off my curves without revealing everything .

What is your best asset? Physically and otherwise.
I think my best asset is my exotic looks, because I look so different people can't guess what I am, which leads to interesting conversations. I also have a beautiful mind that thinks outside the box.... I'm definitely a leader and not a follower.

Give us a little more background about yourself and your life story so far.
Growing up in Santa Monica, I suffered from very bad ADHD which was compensated by a high IQ. I tested out of high school by taking a simple exam, then attended community college and received a perfect GPA of 4.0. I also studied for my real estate exam and became a realtor during the real estate boom. Later on I applied to UCLA and earned a communications degree. During my studies at UCLA I was working as a realtor and invested in property. I eventually graduated and continued investing in real estate. I was planning to apply to law school but I no longer saw myself being studious when the market was so lucrative.

What would people be most surprised to know about you?
That I have no tattoos and I have no veneers despite living in LA.

How long have you been modelling and what would do if you weren't modelling?
I have been modelling since I was 18, because before that my parents didn't allow self-expression. If I wasn't modelling I would probably be a bad ass attorney. I'm always in search of justice and truth.

What have you learned about men over the years?
Never depend on a man and always be in control of your own life. Be your own sugar daddy! Have good communication with them and be direct. Also never settle on your wants and needs. Be with a man that turns you on both physically and mentally.

What's one thing men should always know about women?
Women need to feel safe in order to fall hard in love. If you can make a woman feel she's protected by you and you have her back then you will be irreplaceable in her eyes.

What do you look for in a man?
For me the two most important qualities in a man are honesty and loyalty. I feel like anything else we can work on.

Describe your ideal date.
A romantic setting, candlelit dinner with a man I have chemistry and connection with, feeding each other delicious food followed by dessert and making out all night, etc.

What can we get you at the bar?
A margarita with tajin on the rim.

Got a hangover cure?
Just don't drink.

What's your best hidden talent?
You have to ask my boyfriend for the answer to that question.

Do you have any phobias?
I'm afraid of skydiving or anything associated with heights, I feel like I would forget to deploy the parachute.

*"If I wasn't modelling I would probably be a **bad ass attorney**. I'm always in search of justice and truth."*

"If you can make a woman feel she's protected by you and you have her back then you will be ***irreplaceable*** *in her eyes."*

How would you describe yourself in five words?
Driven, honest, humble, loyal, and witty.

Who is your girl crush and why?
My ultimate girl crush is Marilyn Monroe. She's also a Gemini with the same birthday as me and a sex icon. I also love Megan Fox because she's very sultry and has great fashion sense. Another modern day girl crush of mine is effortlessly gorgeous and has a classic look; Natalie Portman.

What's the freakiest/weirdest thing someone has sent you via social media?
A teenage boy DM'd me and requested that I join him as his date for prom. He said he has been a fan for years. He also offered me his mum's jewellery as form of appreciation if I agree.

What is your motto in life?
"We regret the things we don't do more than the things we do." Mark Twain

What's next for you? Any exciting projects on the horizon you can share with us?
I'm working on some music and some epic photoshoots. I also plan to have an extensive travel calendar this year.

Finally, where would you like to be in five years?
I would like to be in my best shape, owning a business and living in my dream home. ■

"I feel like I would forget to ***deploy the parachute.****"*

STATUS UPDATE

FULL NAME:
Sara Natalia Kova

HOMETOWN:
Los Angeles

BORN:
June 1

INSTAGRAM:
@miss_saracha

SNAPCHAT:
Dollfaceminx

PHOTOGRAPHY:
Arthur St. John
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Bridget Martinez
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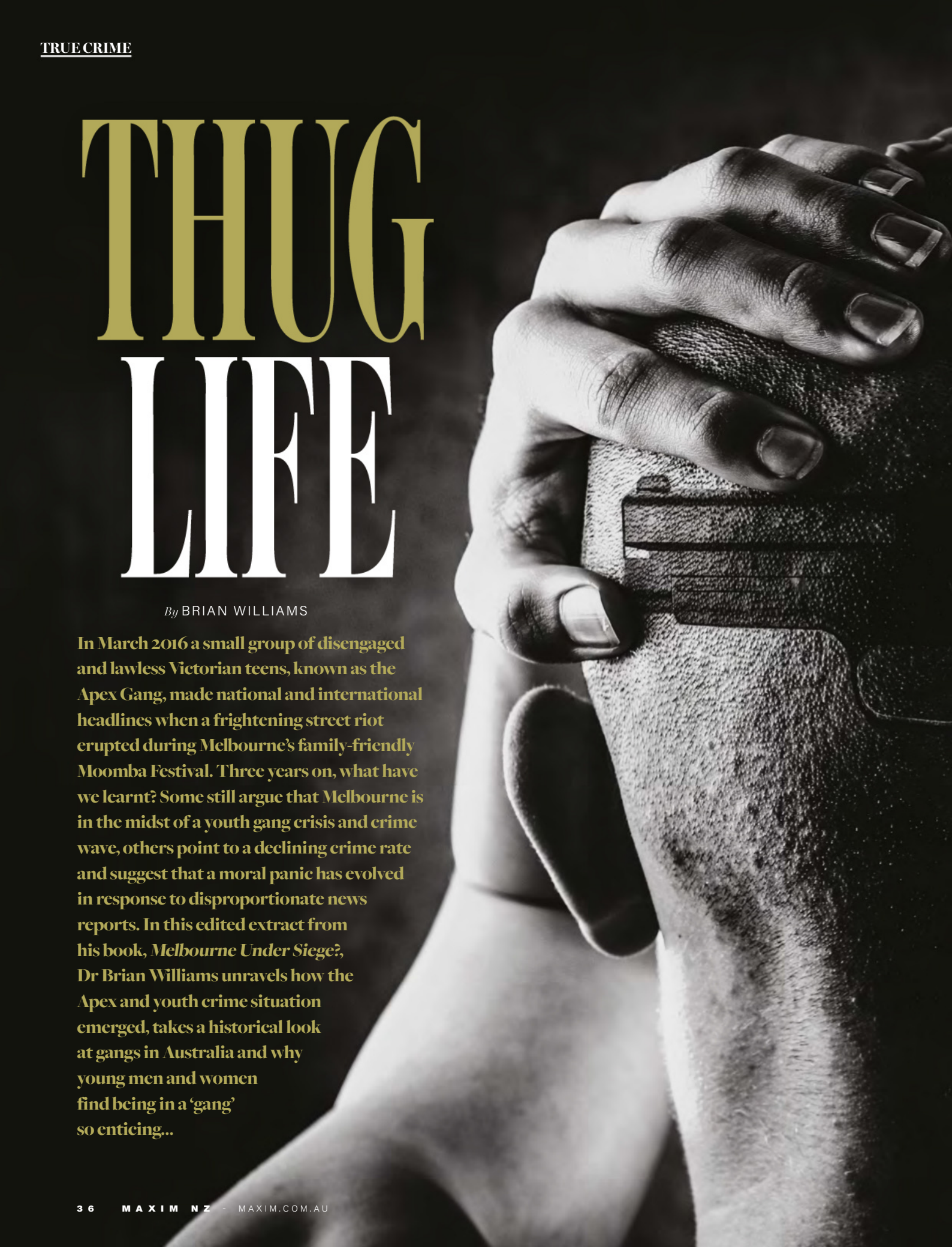
THUG LIFE

By BRIAN WILLIAMS

In March 2016 a small group of disengaged and lawless Victorian teens, known as the Apex Gang, made national and international headlines when a frightening street riot erupted during Melbourne's family-friendly Moomba Festival. Three years on, what have we learnt? Some still argue that Melbourne is in the midst of a youth gang crisis and crime wave, others point to a declining crime rate and suggest that a moral panic has evolved in response to disproportionate news reports. In this edited extract from his book, *Melbourne Under Siege?*, Dr Brian Williams unravels how the Apex and youth crime situation emerged, takes a historical look at gangs in Australia and why young men and women find being in a 'gang' so enticing...



During 2014, a group of dissociated teens, mostly of South Sudanese descent, first formed the so-called Apex Gang, clumsily naming their breakaway mob after their non-descript residential street in the south-eastern Melbourne suburb of Dandenong. They were soon joined by other like-minded youngsters from a mixture of ethnic backgrounds, including Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern and Australian.

The 'gang' — if it ever really existed at all — never displayed any of the indicators traditionally associated with such a criminal outfit. It seemingly had no structure or organisation, no formalised leadership and no defined membership. Nor did the group have a clubhouse, a uniform, a set of colours, or even a common purpose. Yet, within a few short years, the loosely defined Apex Gang evidently swelled in numbers and spread its tentacles. It was subsequently joined in the fray by other similar groups such as the YCW (Young Crucified Warriors), Islander 23 and MTS (Menace to Society).

Despite considerable examples of unlawful and antisocial behaviour seemingly modelled on such violent video games as *Grand Theft Auto*, these gangs mostly flew under the media and public radar until a frightening street riot erupted in the streets of Melbourne in the most publicly exposed way imaginable — during the family-friendly Moomba celebrations in March 2016. The ensuing mayhem, perpetrated by hundreds of swarming supporters of Apex and Islander 23, put Melbourne firmly in the international spotlight for all the wrong reasons. All of a sudden the city didn't look so marvellous any more. It now looked like Melbourne had gone mad.

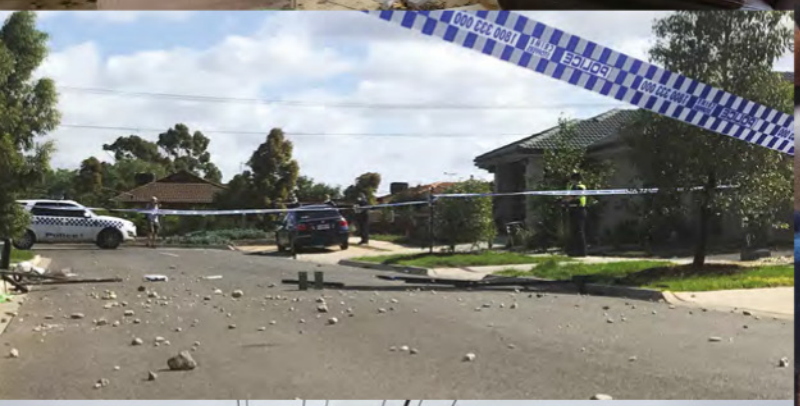
The Moomba riot was a watershed moment in the reputational history of the Apex Gang, and others like it. There was now a media firestorm about Apex, and headline after headline was devoted to the fabled gang's sordid and outrageous activities, real or perceived.

The brazen attacks labelled and publicised under the banner of 'Apex' were characterised by their outrageous levels of violence and randomness: car-jackings, assaults, home invasions, personal thefts, shop smash and grabs, ram raids, jewellery store heists, vandalism and public brawls. These wrongdoers had seemingly no respect for the law, little trepidation about the powers of the police, and only scant fear about the consequences of their actions.

The response to the 'Apex' problem and ensuing mass media attention has understandably left everybody talking. Emotional opinions, untested perceptions and rubbery statistics have been left flying around everywhere. Some in very high places have suggested that Melburnians have become so traumatised by the gang culture they are too scared to venture out at night. Their dissenters mock these suggestions, even providing satirical responses online. To others, an overemphasis on political correctness impeded the swiftness of the response needed.

But Victoria Police formed a different view, confidently declaring in April 2017 that Apex was by then a spent force and a 'nonentity'. Some in the know questioned if Apex ever existed at all, and suggested that the entire assemblage may have simply been a front for more organised and mature criminals willing to recruit impressionable minors do their dirty work.

The most polarising question of all that has emerged is whether or not Melbourne is in the midst of a youth gang 'crisis' and ensuing 'crime wave'. Although the available crime data does not always fall into line with the rhetoric, those from both sides of the debate often use the same sets of statistics to justify their position, which only goes to show how easily these types of broadly calculated figures can be cherry-picked or carved out to support a preordained argument. Yet, the most deeply disturbing development throughout this whole



debate has been the emergence of some of the worst prejudice in Australian history. In particular, it has been the innocent Australians of South Sudanese descent who have found themselves being unfairly targeted and discriminated against. In both express and implied ways, this racism has been conveyed and amplified through numerous methods, ranging all the way from blatantly uncensored online rants to subtle reporting practices.

Whilst there can be no denying that a very, very small minority of Australian–South Sudanese youths have fallen into criminal conduct (about 150 hardcore offenders at last count) any attempt to racially transfer blame for this behaviour on to an entire sector of the population can only be described as despicable. And in modern day Australia it should be possible to outline and debate the pertinent issues without any need to slide into racism.

It is clearly time to provide a balanced review of the 'Apex'-like developments to separate the perceptions from the realities, always mindful of the fact that there have been many victims left severely traumatised. It needs to be understood from the outset that the problems we are facing are not just policing issues. And a deeper evaluation should also not ignore the most pivotal question of all: how do these embittered young people end up being so dangerously of the rails in the first place?

With so much recent talk about Apex and other youth crimes gangs causing such disorder, it is also worth reminding ourselves that groups of belligerent young men have routinely formed fearsome gangs and mindlessly rebelled against the laws of the community. They have also sought opportunities to belt the living daylights out of each other, and often for no particularly good reason. All major Australian cities have had their gangs over the years — ever since crime statistics started to be recorded, 'youth crime' has been a recognisable problem. And it has always attracted the headlines.

During the late 19th century, Melbourne journalists and the courts identified gang-like street crime by labelling the lawless participants as 'larrikins' — the term broadly applied to the groups of young males who were then harassing customers in busy shopping strips, robbing passers-by in the street, and storming pubs and shops to steal drink, food, clothing and cash. From there right up till World War II, the Melbourne street gangs came to be known as 'pushes'. The 'pushes' were all frighteningly violent street brawlers, and their menacing activities and tribalism soon saw the inner industrial areas of Melbourne divided into unofficial boundaries, which contemporary residents would hardly be able to pinpoint today.

The pushes all wore distinctive attire and had colourful tags, which usually reflected their geographic origins. The impoverished industrial areas, such as Collingwood, Richmond and Fitzroy had multiple pushes within their boundaries, all heavily opposed to each other. One of Australia's most legendary gangsters, Squizzy Taylor, had commenced his criminal activities stalking around with a notorious larrikin crew called the Bourke Street Rats before graduating to lead one of the Richmond pushes.

And Melbourne was not alone in the growth of the youth pushes. One of the most infamous packs in Australian history was the Rocks push, a notorious gang which violently dominated and terrorised The Rocks area of Sydney for several decades. Speaking of Sydney, it should also not be forgotten that after the carrying of concealed handguns was

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: LUIS ENRIQUE ASCUI _ AAP; JAKE NOWAKOWSKI _ NEWSPIX; BRIAN WILLIAMS; CAROLINE SCHELLE _ AAP

Clockwise (from top left): some of the criminal damage, vandalism and 'tagging' evident at the wrecked Ecoville Community Park in Tarneit; Federation Square in Melbourne during the Moomba festival in 2016 — as tentions rose, the attention soon turned from festivities to fights; The quiet Apex Street in Dandenong North — despite the spotlight of media attention, it would never deserve to feature on the itinerary of any crime tour; Suburban mayhem — the day after an out-of-control street party in Attunga Grove, Werribee

outlawed there in 1927, the New South Wales hoods began carrying razors in their pockets to disfigure the faces of their adversaries. The brutal activities of the razor gangs continued for a number of years, and was also replicated in the inner areas of Melbourne, where fishhooks often became the weapon of choice. In Victoria, a police squad known as the Terrible Ten was assembled to deal with the local pushes. The Terrible Ten not only consisted of the burliest men available in the force, they were even officially issued with lengths of hose and pick handles to apply to the noggins of the offenders. This was the type of response that law-abiding citizens then wanted to see.

A new gang title emerged in the 1950s and 'criminally-inclined youth' was again identified as a dangerous phenomenon. The 'new folk devils' were the male Bodgies and female Widgies, who were characterised by their hairstyle, dress and penchant for rock music. They lounged around developing districts, often intimidating passers-by near milk bars, street corners and dance halls. As a sign of the times, most Bodgies rode motorbikes and some even had cars, duly hotted up and gaudily decorated.

All of Australia's major cities had a Bodgie and Widgie problem, with Sydney leading the leather-clad charge. The first Bodgie gang there was the Woolloomooloo Yanks, and by 1948 about 200 Brylcreem-lathered Bodgies were regularly congregating in Kings Cross milk bars, before they began frequenting other inner-Sydney locations. Concern about the blade-carrying Bodgies and Widgies ignited a wave of moral indignation throughout the Australian community.

Some concerned and punitive citizens advocated that harsh corporal punishment was the only method that could be applied to Bodgies to help them see the errors of their ways. Less popular were those theorists more concerned with adopting preventative measures. With the vocal support of many middle-class Victorians — including parents, teachers, clergy and community leaders — the police of the day cared little about theoretical niceties or the need to discuss psychological rigour. They preferred a confrontationist approach. In such an environment, no-one seemed to object too much in Victoria when a specialised 'Bodgie Squad' of plain-clothed, heavyweight police were assembled in the late 1950s to deal with the problem. Their most common tactics consisted of giving all Bodgies a thick ear outside dance halls, or arresting them on the spot and later applying a bit more physical treatment at the local lock-up. Under such persuasive measures, the Bodgies and Widgies of Melbourne were eventually consigned to history.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s the 'Sharpie' and 'Skinhead' movement had clearly arrived. And with this youth subculture came a lot of very nasty gangs. As recalled by Melbourne rock identity, Bruce Milne, in an article for 'Perfect Sound Forever', Sharpies were largely defined by their haircuts and clothing. Though there were some variations, the basic look for both males and females was short hair, with long mullet wisps (or

'rat tails', as they were called) out the back, often bleached. The standard uniform was flared, high-waisted pants or jeans and a tight-fitted, striped cardigan. Staggers jeans were worn for special occasions, and the girls were sometimes seen in extremely short denim skirts.

Footwear for males consisted of big platform boots, often multicoloured and sometimes even made of suede. They had a heavy heel and an exaggerated rounded or squared toe — coincidently, perfect for kicking a fallen enemy in the head. Girls wore platform shoes with a solid cork base — the higher the better — or sometimes treads, a weird looking sandal made out of car tyres. The height of their shoes and tight cut of their clothes meant that many Sharpies seemed to strut around with a gait not dissimilar to the comedic TV character Herman Munster. They even raged a bit like Herman Munster as they performed their usual dances to simple, pulsating, call-to-arms anthems like "Metal Guru" and "Teenage Rampage". The classic Sharpie dance saw them forming small circles, bouncing on their legs, and thumping their fists up and down in front of their bodies.

In terms of adornments, Sharpie girls always heavily plucked their eyebrows, and caked themselves in heavy eye make-up of gaudy colours such as powder blue and burnt orange. On the other hand, Sharpie boys were the first males to routinely wear earrings, initially just one small ring, although, this number seemed to escalate with the rise of the Sharpie movement. Sharpies were often bored kids, hailing from the battling outer suburbs that had sprung up too quickly, and they had a dearth of facilities to entertain them.

Their gangs were highly territorial, and often named after the housing commission estates from whence they came. Broadmeadows had the fearsome Broady Boys, and the outer eastern enclave of Jordanville had the Jordy Boys. Other housing commission areas in Doveton and Sunshine also had their own gangs. Among a multitude of other local luminaries, there was also the Holmesglen Skins, South Blackie [Blackburn] Sharps, Frankston Sharps, South Melbourne Sharps, Melbourne Skins, A and A Sharps, Ringwood Sharps, Berger Boys, (Heidelberg), Borough Boys (Greensborough), Balmoral Boys (named after Balmoral Street in Braybrook) and the Northside Sharps.

Presumably because they were either too poor or too young to own cars, much of the criminal behaviour of the Sharpies took place on railway lines and their associated stations. The Sharps would congregate in huge numbers around Flinders Street in central Melbourne, disturb local businesses, vandalise public and private property, and accost passengers for money. They would also do likewise around cinemas, bowling alleys, pinball parlours, musical concerts and suburban shopping centres.

At least two major Sharpie battles resulted in two music festivals — an all-day concert held at Frankston on Boxing Day, and a Richmond concert featuring Sharpie favourite Lobby Loyde and The Coloured Balls — being abruptly called off when the bouncers (from Bob Jones security, no less) could not possibly quell the riots. Because of their exaggerated dress and mannerisms, a certain level of sentimentality may have historically attached itself to the 1970s urban stories about the Sharpies. It needs to be understood that whilst many embraced the Sharpie fashion and ethos, not all were actually members of a gang.

But that is where the joy should end. There was absolutely nothing humorous or heroic about many of the thugs attached to the Sharpie gangs. Some were violent individuals, who used strength-in-numbers

Moomba 2016 — shortly after the family fireworks display there was absolute chaos on the streets of Melbourne

PHOTO: JAKE NOWAKOWSKI _ NEWSPIX

to conceal their cowardice, and others were effectively serving apprenticeships for what would later become hardened criminal careers. They were into aggravated burglaries, savage assaults, random bashings, car theft, rape, arson, wholesale vandalism, armed robberies, and were usually equipped with a range of knives and other weapons. Front page stories featured iron bars and homemade guns.

And while they did engage in punch-ups among themselves, they much preferred easier targets, particularly anyone they randomly decided did not fit their image, or anyone who had innocently strayed into their self-designated territory. They hated surfers and would often travel (you guessed it, by train) to a coastal suburb to bash as many beachgoers as they could. Anyone with longer hair could be ostracised and isolated as a 'pansy' and subjected to a 'poofter' bashing, and they sneeringly referred to all ethnic groups as 'wogs' and doubly targeted them.

In light of these types of experiences, there was little public objection whenever the cops bit the bullet and threw the local Sharps or Skins into a divvy van and drove them off for a stint in the local cells, or even in gaol. They were eventually replaced by the emerging punk culture, famed for its own challenging brand of behaviour, that operated on the fringe of society.

The 1980s were halcyon years for Melbourne's infamous graffiti crews, with gang membership booming during this era. The increased exposure to American media showcased the culture of graffiti, hip hop and American gangs, which in turn, influenced Australian youths. The new gangs were frequently profiled in the press for their criminal activity. Some of the illicit luminaries at this time were DMC (Da Mad Artists), WCA (Wild Child Artists), PBP (Puffing Billy Posse) and AC (All City). Although their striking 'artwork' was revered and celebrated by other younger graffiti writers, most in the community considered it to be downright vandalism and highly expensive damage to public property.

The graffiti crews represent a rare example of a gang culture that has demonstrated longevity, often boasting an older membership base. Some members are even aged in their fifties, having first met as teenagers in the 1980s. They have now clocked up more than thirty years of offending, and gone on to prove that you're never too old to be immature. The veterans have been joined by a core group of men in their 20s and 30s, in addition to children as young as 12.

Given that graffiti is a cashless criminal subculture, the motivation behind this type of activity is a mystery to many. The exponents are also highly sophisticated and networked, taking the time to meticulously plan their crimes. 'Their tag is their cash — it's their notoriety, it's their fame,' explains Sergeant Duncan Browne of the Victorian transit safety division. The graffiti gangs have never seemed to cause too much hysteria, because it is the gangs with violence in their culture that usually have everybody talking. Those that specialise in drawing pictures on trains, calling out names, and pulling faces at police rarely inject much panic into the populace.

In more recent times, many youth gangs have been perceived as loosely overlapping with their ethnic identity. Typically, they comprise of male members sharing common religions or ancestry. In the outer south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Latin American youth have been linked to a gang identified by its Noble Park postcode, 3174, and the Lebanese Tigers has emerged in the inner north. There have also been Chinese and knife-wielding Vietnamese gangs emerge all over Australia. In Sydney, a prominent gang has been Brothers for Life, which is believed to have recently split into a number of cliques.

Some lesser-known Australian youth outfits have now replicated the names of American street gangs, notably Black P. Stones, Latin Kings, MS-13, Bloods and Crips. Other more radical gangs such as Friends Stand United, Public Enemy No. 1, Volksfront, Hammerskins, and Blood and Honour have also hit Australian streets. Increased attention has recently been paid to Queensland's south-eastern gangs, Lesbian Butch Soldiers (LBS), Village People and FLC.

Whilst there is still a multitude of purported 'gangs' dotted throughout the suburbs of Melbourne, their links to criminal activity are tenuous. Many appear to be little more than loosely affectionate names used referentially by youths residing in these areas. They include such self-appointed cadres as Footscrazy Boys (Footscray Boys), Sunshine Boys, KBK (Kick Back Crew), HCB (Hoppers Crossing Boys), Wezza Bloods (Werribee Bloods), KPC (Kings Park Crew), D-Block (Deer Park), STA (St Albans), Laverton Boys, YRB (Young Richmond Boys), AVB (Ascot Vale Boys), Flemington Boys, MBML (My Brothers My Life), NMB (North Melbourne Boys), ETB (East Timorese Boys), C-Town Soldiers (Cranbourne), Reservoir Bloods, Braybrook Boys, Tottenham Crew, Altown Boys (Altona), JSC (Junior Sunshine Crips), SNK (St Albans/Kings Park), KYR (Kill Your Rivals) and 3LK (Love, Liberty, Loyal, Knowledge).

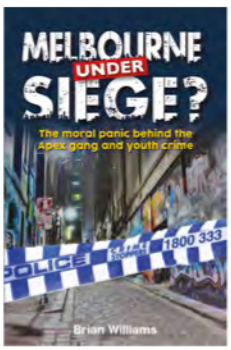
The progress of technology and social media has seen the internet become a focal point for the modern youth gang. Their purported fellow travellers largely communicate and coordinate their activities via the computer, whilst also posting pictures and boasts of their exploits. Some are even savvy and motivated enough to run a gang's personal website. Many of the more modern gangs can come and go very rapidly, about the same timeframe that alliances can swiftly shift on social media updates. As veteran youth worker Les Twentyman has observed, "Of all the gangs that start up, only about one in 10 hangs on for more than a few months."

Why have some young men and women traditionally found the allure of being in a 'gang' so enticing? They seem to take enormous physical and reputational risks for seemingly little or no reward. It must be understood that youth gang members feel a sense of belonging in their group, which they believe they cannot replicate anywhere else. During their developing years, they enjoy the thrill seeking and high risk-taking. It provides them with more spurts of adrenaline than anything else, and satisfies their thirst for notoriety. And even though this concept may be difficult to reconcile for some moralists, they also do it all for fun.

In light of all this, why did the Apex Gang (and recent other examples like the reputed Menace To Society) cause so much fear, discussion and media attention? Why the sudden re-emergence of 'moral panic'? Much of this attention surely relates to the nature of the crimes — extremely violent, and directed randomly at everyday citizens. But some of this hysteria has also been race related.

Those who admit to being part of the Sharpie gang movement over 40 years ago — yes, there are still some around — will hazily reminisce that most of their anger was directed at other gangs. By contrast, they will argue that the Apex-like affiliates have always appeared to show no fear of the consequences of their actions, and there is a perception that they have 'figured out' the foibles in the justice system to exploit. In such circumstances, it is little wonder that they have attracted media saturation. ■

MELBOURNE UNDER SIEGE? THE MORAL PANIC BEHIND THE APEX GANG AND YOUTH CRIME **BY BRIAN WILLIAMS, NEW HOLLAND PUBLISHERS RRP$32.99, IS AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD BOOK RETAILERS OR ONLINE AT www.newhollandpublishers.com**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Brian Williams is a writer, educator, public presenter and lawyer, with a specific interest in criminal law and criminology.

MAXIM FLASHBACK

THE GOODS

Almost four years ago Aussie pop star **DELTA GOODREM** topped our annual definitive list of Australia's most influential, talented, beautiful and newsworthy women of the year. In this exclusive photo shoot and interview she discussed facing adversity, her new music, the pandemic and being crowned the 2020 Ultra Tune MAXIM HOT 100 winner...

Photographed by CARLOTTA MOYE
Interview by SANTI PINTADO
Styled by JESS PECORARO

STATUS UPDATE

FULL NAME:
Delta Goodrem

BORN:
November 9

HOMETOWN:
Sydney, NSW

FIVE-WORD SELF-DESCRIPTION:
"Authentic, loyal, compassionate, playful and creative."

INSTAGRAM:
@deltagoodrem

TWITTER:
@DeltaGoodrem

Congratulations on topping the 2020 Ultra Tune MAXIM HOT 100 list, Delta. How does it feel to be No.1?
I feel incredibly thankful to the readers. This is a great era of my life and a wonderful honour to receive. I am grateful to be listed alongside so many other terrific individuals who are beautiful inside and out.

You've had many number ones in your career. How does this one compare?
I held this title from MAXIM a few years ago very proudly and getting the news again literally made my year. This is definitely a highlight of 2020!

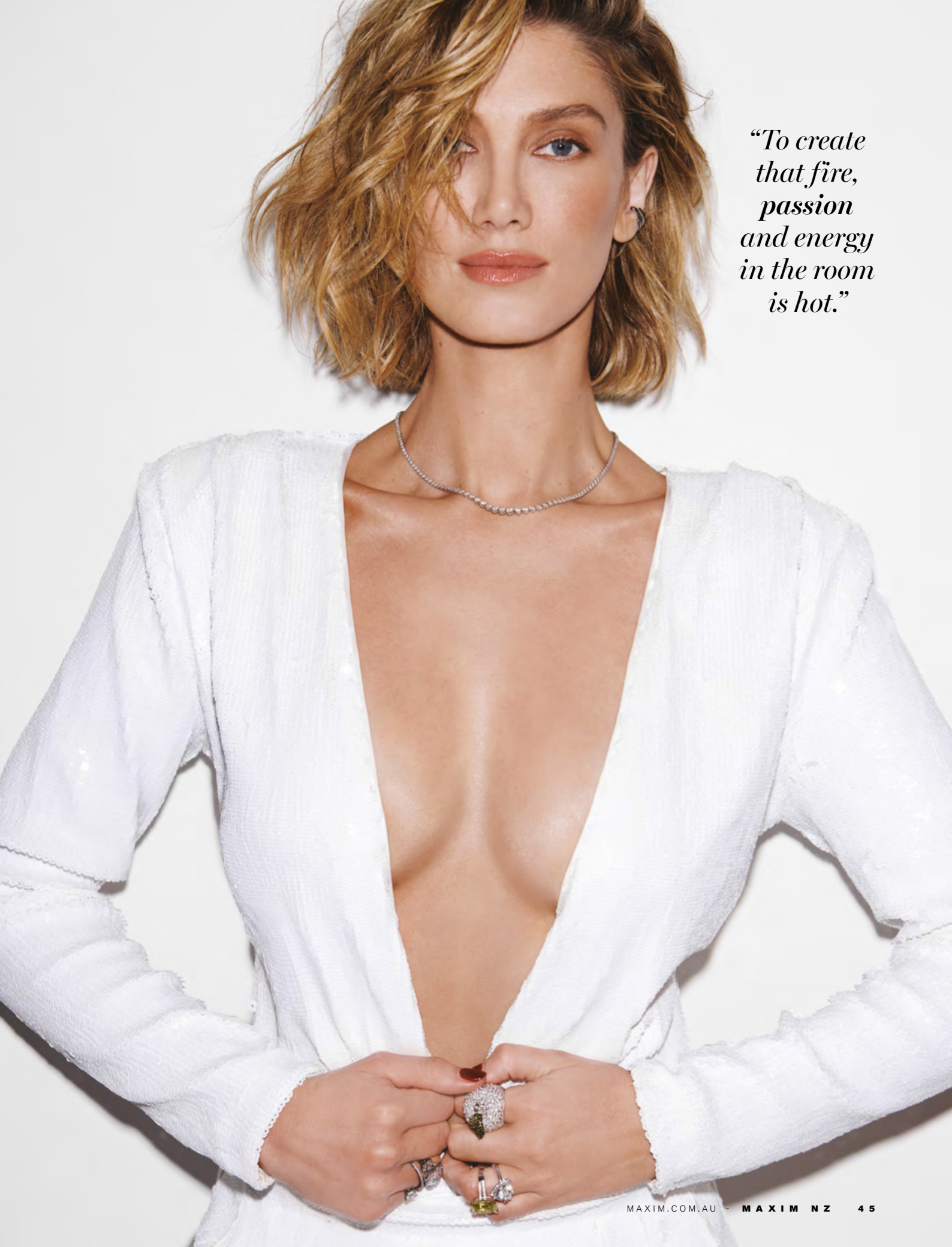
Yes, you were the MAXIM HOT 100 No.1 in 2015. What's changed for you in five years?
It's unbelievable how much can change in just one year. In the past five years I have grown and learned so much and continued to evolve into the person I am today. I am really proud of who I am and I feel secure in the person I have become. I feel free to embrace all the different sides of my authentic self.

What would people be most surprised to know about you?
I work extremely hard. All that we create and put out only comes together with a tremendous amount of hard work. I also think that I am more playful than people realise but also more straight shooting then you may expect. I started in acting and music when I was very young and since I was with adults all the time, people automatically thought I was shy and as a teenager I think people thought I was serious. I am a serious artist, but I like to have a good laugh along the way.

You look absolutely beautiful in this MAXIM shoot — when do you feel sexy?
I feel sexiest and happiest after I have worked hard for a goal and achieved what I set out to do. There is a confidence when you see your dreams come to fruition and that's when I am feeling my best inside and out.

What's your best asset?
I think my best asset is my capacity to care and feel empathy and kindness. Beauty starts from within and I am grateful that my parents raised me to be deeply caring and compassionate for other people.

Here at MAXIM the word "hot" encapsulates so many meanings — from being inspirational to talented to physical attributes. What's your secret to maintaining your hotness?
I think it's about being passionate and driven and having fun while also encouraging everyone to step up to the plate and be the best they can be. To create that fire, passion and energy in the room is hot.



*"To create that fire, **passion** and energy in the room is hot."*

Hair by
DIANE GORGIEVSKI
Make-Up By
NONI SMITH-FINLAY

"I am grateful to be listed alongside so many other terrific individuals who are beautiful inside and out."

How have you kept yourself busy during COVID-19?
I have stayed very busy this whole year. In the very beginning of lockdown I tried to embrace the work from home life by taking up hobbies, languages and cleaning the cupboards. After some not so great attempts at baking, I realised it was best to get back to being creative and turned to music and writing and recording nearly every day and have been releasing new music throughout. Global Citizen together with Lady Gaga reached out and invited me to perform as part of the online One World: Together At Home festival in support of the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund for the World Health Organization. On Anzac Day, it was such an honour to co-host the Music From The Home Front live music event broadcast, and performed 'Down Under' with Men At Work's Colin Hay. I also started The Bunkerdown Sessions as a way to stay connected with everyone from around the world and to provide something to look forward to each week through the healing power of music. We did live-streamed performances for 25 weeks and it's been an incredible experience. Launching the Delta Goodrem Foundation, which focuses on spreading kindness, hope and support for those facing illness, hardship and inequality has certainly been a highlight in 2020. I am very proud to have partnered with St Vincent's Hospital on our first initiative in cellular therapy research for cancer treatment.

Brilliant. You've overcome so much adversity in your life. How do you keep on keeping on?
The reality of life is that we all have to keep going, even when it's tough. We have to take it one step at a time. I am no different to anyone else that at times I keep having to pick myself up and continue to keep moving my life forward. You always have to keep the faith and have hope. Throughout our lifetime we encounter all sorts of adversities, but I think it comes down to attitude and how you see the positive in each experience while never giving up faith that you can get through anything.

What is your motto in life?
I absolutely love this quote from Mother Teresa and has been one of my guiding mottos lately. "People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway. If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway. What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway. The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway. Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway. In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway". ■

*"I literally fight **anyone** in cages."*

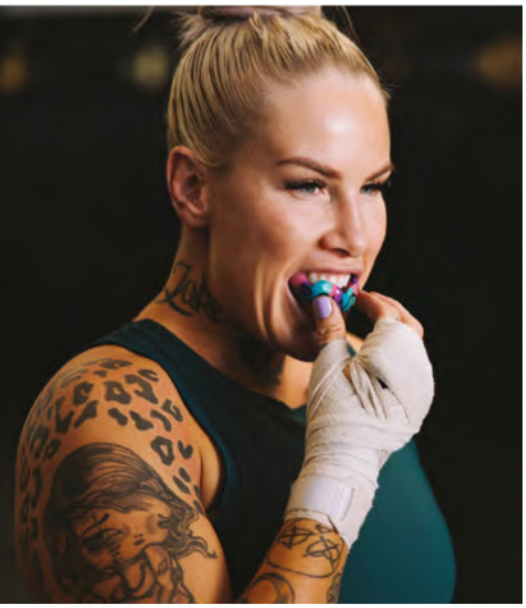
FIGHTING TO LIVE

Decorated MMA Fighter and bare-knuckle boxer **BEC RAWLINGS** is the star of a poignant new doco tracing her remarkable story in and out of the cage. MAXIM chats with her to find out why she decided to reveal the darkest moments of her life on screen...

Bec Rawlings is ready to go there. When we talk, the legendary MMA fighter turned bare knuckle boxer has just attended the premiere of a new documentary on her life and is in fine form. Titled *Fight to Live*, the doco is a gripping look at a young woman's journey from victim to conqueror; from a troubled young kid in Launceston to some of the highest heights in MMA and on the UFC circuit.

As she reveals in the film, Rawlings was a self-described troubled kid who grew up in Launceston before moving to Brisbane in her early 20s to pursue MMA fighting.

Bec on set



ORGA

TEAM RODRIGUEZ
TEAM RODRIGUEZ

MP 2 WARRIOR
ULTIMATE HUMAN EXPERIMENT

> *I have a **mantra** that I go over in my head: six or seven words that make me really dial in.*

What followed was a seven-year run on the international circuit fighting in the strawweight and flyweight divisions before switching to bare knuckle boxing in 2019. Professionally, Rawlings is one of Australia's most decorated mixed martial artists of all time but Fight to Live reveals the dark reality behind her adrenaline-pumping success in the cage.

For several years, she was subject to harrowing domestic violence at the hands of a former partner, an experience she recounts in unflinching detail in the film. "People are very shocked that I found myself in that situation. I'm the epitome of a strong woman," she tells MAXIM somewhat matter-of-factly. "I literally fight anyone in cages. I know how to fight and that shows it can happen to anyone."

Despite her persona as an outspoken warrior woman, Rawlings is a deeply private person at heart and the prospect of exposing one of the hardest chapters of her life on camera gave her pause. "I put out there what I want people to know," she explains. "I'm still very outspoken online but I have to have something for myself."

Mental strength is crucial to the success of fighters and Bec, a mum of two, says she must click into "fighter mode" every time she enters the ring. "I have to dial in and focus and switch from mummy mode to fighter mode," she says. "I have a mantra that I go over in my head: six or seven words that make me really dial in."

Rawlings tapped into those same techniques when tackling the more painful parts of her remarkable journey in *Fight to Live*. She credits her friend and the film's director Tom Haramis for encouraging her to tell her story on screen and reveal a very painful experience previously unknown to anyone but her closest confidantes.

"That interview I can remember intimately," she says of the moment she reveals the domestic abuse on camera for the first time. "Tom got me to be open up and it was important that he was my friend and he trusted me."

The cinematic release of Rawlings' documentary coincides with a renewed national focus on the crisis of domestic violence in Australia. Shocking statistics reveal an entrenched crisis of women dying at the hands of their male partners at a rate of about one woman every four days. While newly announced financial support to help women flee abusive partners will help, Bec thinks a stigma remains around the scourge of domestic violence occurring behind closed doors. "I want to help empower people and it doesn't mean you're weak. Honestly, I hope I can help people get out of the same situation."

Now screening in select cinemas nationwide, Rawlings hopes sharing her story inspires other women facing domestic violence that there is a way out. She also reveals tentative plans for a wider streaming release to take the project into Australian living rooms. Despite the serious subject matter, she insists the film is not designed to be a cautionary tale of domestic violence but rather a story of resilience and inspiration.

"The documentary is not all sad," she explains. "We don't want to depress people; we want to inspire them." ■

***FIGHT TO LIVE* is now showing in select cinemas**

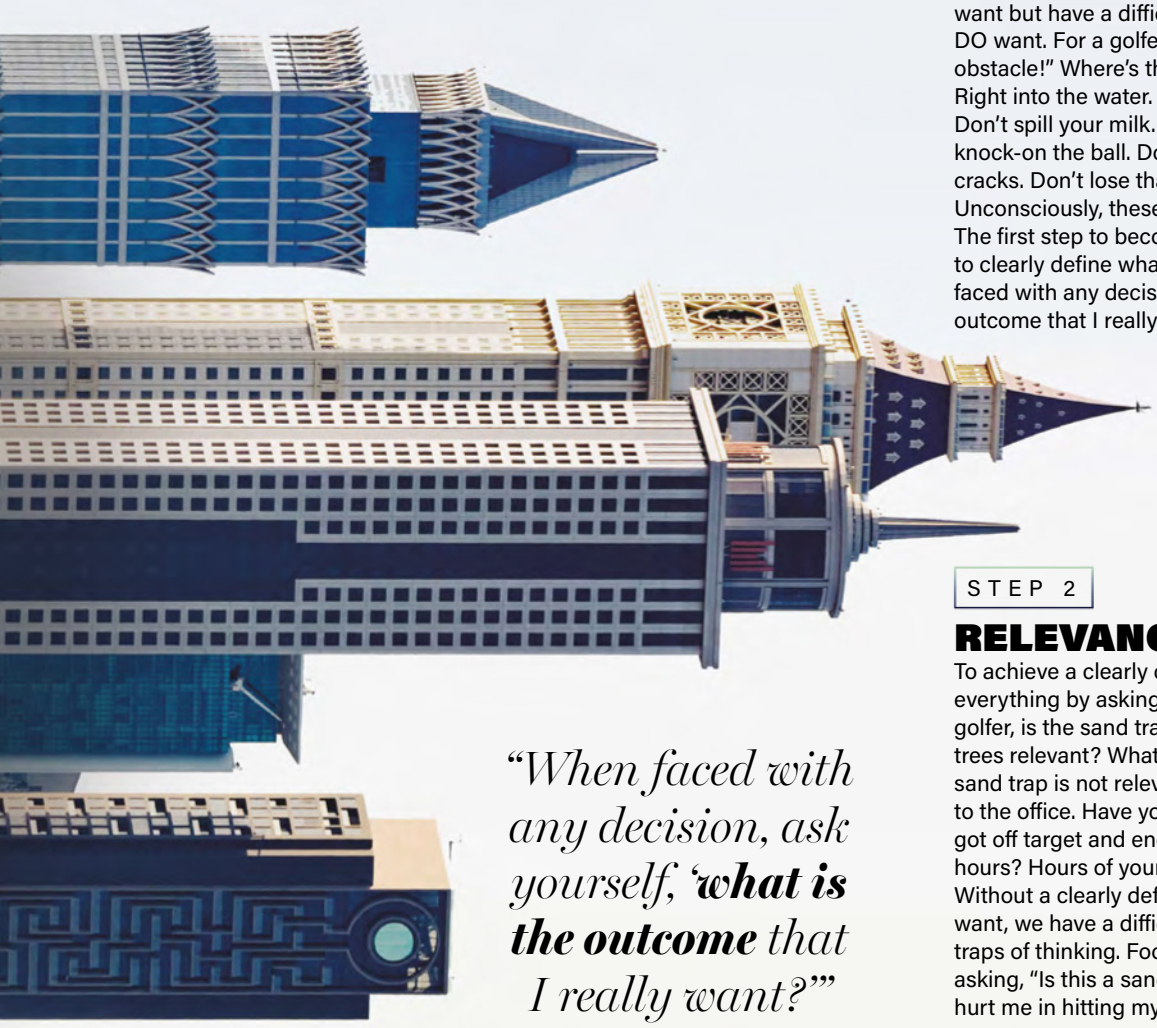
Why Positive Thinking is a WASTE *of* TIME

ANDREW D. WITTMAN, PHD is a former bodyguard to Sir Elton John, Hillary Clinton, Benjamin Netanyahu and many other prominent politicians. He's also a former U.S. Marine, Police Officer, Special Agent and the Founder & CEO of The Mental Toughness Training Center in South Carolina. As a Keynote Motivational Speaker and "Agent of Change" he is hired around the world to help the likes of corporate executives to elite athletes better deal with stress at work and at home. Here he reveals how positive thinking isn't necessarily a positive thing...

By ANDREW D. WITTMAN, PHD

In my line of work, positive thinking will get you killed faster than negative thinking will because it denies risk and is driven by emotions rather than by logic. And this is true in every situation. So, instead of trying to always think positively, focus on how to always think critically – it will help you in all areas of your life. Here's how to do it:

If you've ever played golf then you know that there's a physical process for every stroke that includes factors related to grip, stance, body position and the mechanics of the swing. You can become a critical thinker with these same golf-swing-like process to your decision making. The Golf Swing of Thinking is the four-step process through which to run every thought. I call it thinking like CRAP — Clarity, Relevance, Accuracy, Precision. Funny, yes, but most importantly it's memorable.



STEP 1

CLARITY

Most of us have a difficult time communicating clearly, but that's actually a symptom of not thinking clearly. Most tell others what they DON'T want but have a difficult time saying what it is they DO want. For a golfer, "Don't hit it into the water obstacle!" Where's the ball going? Ga-Bluuush! Right into the water. Don't hit it into the sand trap. Don't spill your milk. Don't screw this up. Don't knock-on the ball. Don't let this fall through the cracks. Don't lose that million-dollar account. Unconsciously, these all become the new target. The first step to becoming a critical thinker is to clearly define what it is youDO want. When faced with any decision, ask yourself, what is the outcome that I really want?

*"When faced with any decision, ask yourself, '**what is the outcome** that I really want?'"*

STEP 2

RELEVANCE

To achieve a clearly defined target, we must filter everything by asking, "Is this relevant?" For the golfer, is the sand trap, the water obstacle or the trees relevant? What's the target? The hole. The sand trap is not relevant to the target. Let's take it to the office. Have you ever been in a meeting that got off target and ended up in a sand trap for two hours? Hours of your life you can never get back? Without a clearly defined target of what we do want, we have a difficult time identifying the sand traps of thinking. Focus only on what is relevant by asking, "Is this a sand trap? Does this help me or hurt me in hitting my target?"

STEP 3

ACCURACY

Now, drill down further. To be accurate in our thinking and our communication we must separate facts from truth. Facts and truth are two completely different entities. Facts have actual existence. A fact is merely information, neutral, independent and objective. As a former cop, I was always in search of the facts. When a case went to court, facts were entered into evidence, but the witnesses would swear to tell the truth. Which one is more reliable? Evidence (facts) or eyewitnesses (truths)? We know, for a fact, that eyewitnesses are unreliable. "Truth" is our internal perception of the facts and circumstances that make up the experiences of life. To help you make an important decision, ask yourself, "Is this aspect a truth or is it a fact?"

STEP 4

PRECISION

Once we move things into the fact column from the truth column, we ask, "Can this fact be more exact?" Be precise and specific. A common occurrence at work is when the boss drops one more thing on your plate and says, "I need this ASAP." But is "ASAP" a fact or a truth? "ASAP" is a truth, it means different things to different people. "Boss, when do you need this?" "I need it by Wednesday." Now ask, can this fact be more exact? Yes, it can. "Boss, what time, on Wednesday, do you need this?" "By 12 noon Australian Eastern time." Taking this golf swing approach to thinking pushes the process through your conscious mind, helping you make more informed decisions that will lead to greater levels of success. ■

LIVIN' THE DREAM

American beauty and striking fashion model **NICHELLE LYNN WOLCOTT** loves a laugh, living life her way and inspiring people to follow their dreams...

Photographed by ROCKY BATCHELOR *Interview by* PARIS RAINE *Hair & make-up* PREP TULUM

Tell us a bit about yourself, Nichelle.
I moved from Minnesota to Los Angeles USA to pursue a career in modelling and business. I want to inspire people to always follow their dreams and take the leap because you never know what will come from it.

What do you love most about yourself?
I really love that I can get along with anyone and any personality because I love to learn and listen. I really do care to actually listen to everyone's story.

What is the first thing you do when you get up in the morning?
I give my puppy Charlie a kiss and I text

my mum good morning. Then, I make a smoothie, give Charlie a super long walk and if I have time I head to the gym.

What is one of your weird quirks?
I can, literally, make anyone laugh.

What's the first thing you notice when it comes to the opposite gender?
I first notice their smile, then their eyes. Then, if I get the chance to know them, it's their personality and eye contact. If you don't have a sense of humour, though, then that's it.

What do you think are the most attractive qualities in a man?
Loyalty and compassion.

What doesn't impress you on a first date?
Well, sitting on your phone ain't cute.

What advice would you give to a man?
Put yourself in your partner's shoes. And be yourself.

Describe your ideal partner.
Someone I feel safe with, someone I can trust with everything I have and someone who would never betray me.

What's your guilty pleasure?
Milkshakes and cheese. Not together, of course.

What words do you live by?
Forgive never forget.

Lastly, what is one major thing you want to accomplish by the end of this year?
A contract with an amazing agency, and to keep living this dream. ■

"I can get along with anyone and any personality because I love to learn and listen."

"I want to inspire people to always follow their dreams and take the leap because you never know what will come from it."

STATUS UPDATE

NAME:
Nichelle Lynn Wolcott

BORN:
August 10

HOMETOWN:
Mound, Minnesota USA

FIVE-WORD SELF DESCRIPTION:
"Congenial, passionate, outgoing, loyal, driven."

INSTAGRAM:
@missnichelle

THE TRUE STORY OF

As legendary rock deities Guns N' Roses continue to play to sold-out crowds around the world, we throwback to the summer of 1992 when the band toured America with Metallica. From Axl's bizarre personal entourage to Slash's battle with drugs, this extract from the book *Last Of The Giants: The True Story of Guns N' Roses* reveals what really went down on the road with the Gunners back in the not-so-halcyon days...

VINTAGE GUNNERS: The original GNR members (from left to right) Duff McKagan, Slash, Axl Rose, Steven Adler and Izzy Stradlin pose for a PR photo in 1986

W. Axl Rose now had his own expensively assembled retinue of chiropractor, masseuse, vocal coach, bodyguard, driver, personal assistant, PR, manager, plus his psychotherapist, Suzzy London, and a new, even more influential figure: a professional psychic he had recently become enthralled by named Sharon Maynard. The head of a non-profit organisation based in Sedona, Arizona, Arcos Cielos Corp (from the Spanish for 'sky arcs'), describing itself as an 'educational' enterprise, specialising in 'channelling' past lives, extra-terrestrial intelligence and the power of crystals, Maynard was a short, middle-aged Asian woman who had started to take a central role in Axl's life that would stretch throughout the rest of the decade. Operating out of her countryside home, where she lived with her husband, Elliott, a kindly grey-haired man, 'Dr Elliott and Sharon Maynard' had both been thanked in the Use Your Illusion liner notes. Known to the rest of the band and touring crew as Yoda (after the goblin-like mystic in Star Wars), Maynard had a role on the road thatwas less specific than London's, but Axl's reliance on them both grew equally important. According to a crew member, Yoda and her own assistant 'were like aliens'. Every major decision Axl now made was in consultation with Maynard.

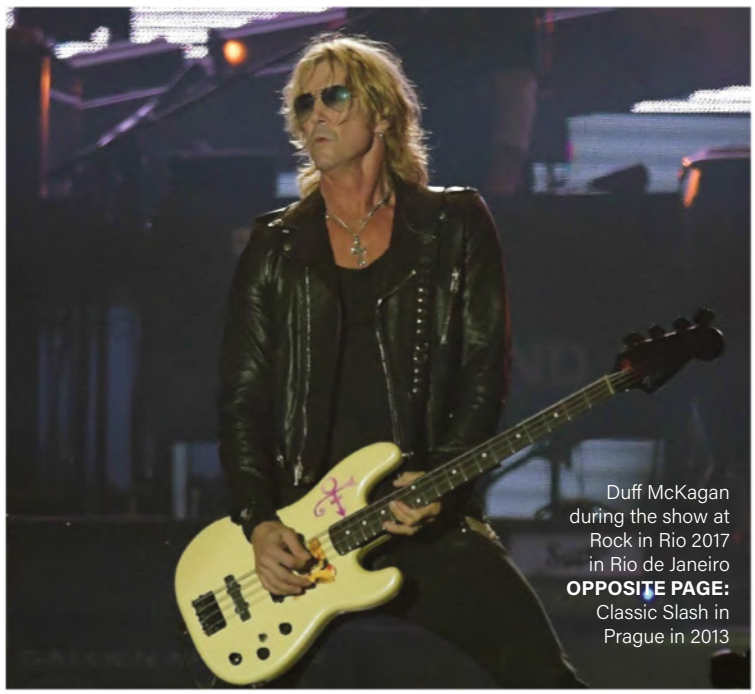
According to Axl, speaking at the time, 'It's like I have a pit crew. And it's like, I'm a car.' The chiropractor also stood at the side of the stage each night so that Axl could get adjusted between songs. And for a while he was taking up to 60 vitamins a day. 'We do muscle testing and kinesiology,' he explained. 'We do chiropractic work and acupuncture. We do cranial adjusting. Oh, yeah, on a daily basis. I'm putting my life back together, and I'm using everything I can.'

Mick Wall, who has known Guns N' Roses since their early days, has spent years interviewing them, their entourage and the most significant members of their management team. He not only knows the names, he allows them to speak with a juddering candour in his most revealing, insightful account ever of this extraordinary band.

Everybody — from the lowliest bag carrier to the loftiest record company executive — was also now forced to sign confidentiality agreements forbidding them from commenting publicly on any aspect of the tour without Axl's express permission, and then only in writing. Whatever 'regression therapy' he was undergoing, paranoia was still the main order of the day and Axl was more determined than ever to exert complete control over any given situation he now found himself in.

For all their efforts behind the scenes, though, the one thing Maynard, London and co. could not protect Axl from was random acts by his own fans. Ten days into the tour with Metallica, at Giant Stadium in Rutherford, New Jersey, on 29 July, during the last song, "Knockin' On Heaven's Door", swaying back and forth in his white spandex shorts, white buckskin jacket and white cowboy hat, Axl was hit in the genitals by a cigarette lighter thrown from the audience. Doubled up in pain, he turned his back on the crowd, threw his microphone into the air, tore off his hat, and staggered to the side of the stage where he complained to band manager Doug Goldstein that his voice had gone. 'He literally came over to the side of the stage and goes [*gruff voice*], "I can't talk. What do you want me to do?"'

Duff took over briefly on vocals while the crowd began chanting, "Axl, Axl, Axl!" But there was no way he was coming back and when the house lights came on the crowd just stood there for a while before filing out, dejected. The very next day an announcement was made claiming Axl had sustained 'severe damage to his vocal cords' and that the next three shows — in Boston, Columbia and Minneapolis — would all



Duff McKagan during the show at Rock in Rio 2017 in Rio de Janeiro
OPPOSITE PAGE: Classic Slash in Prague in 2013

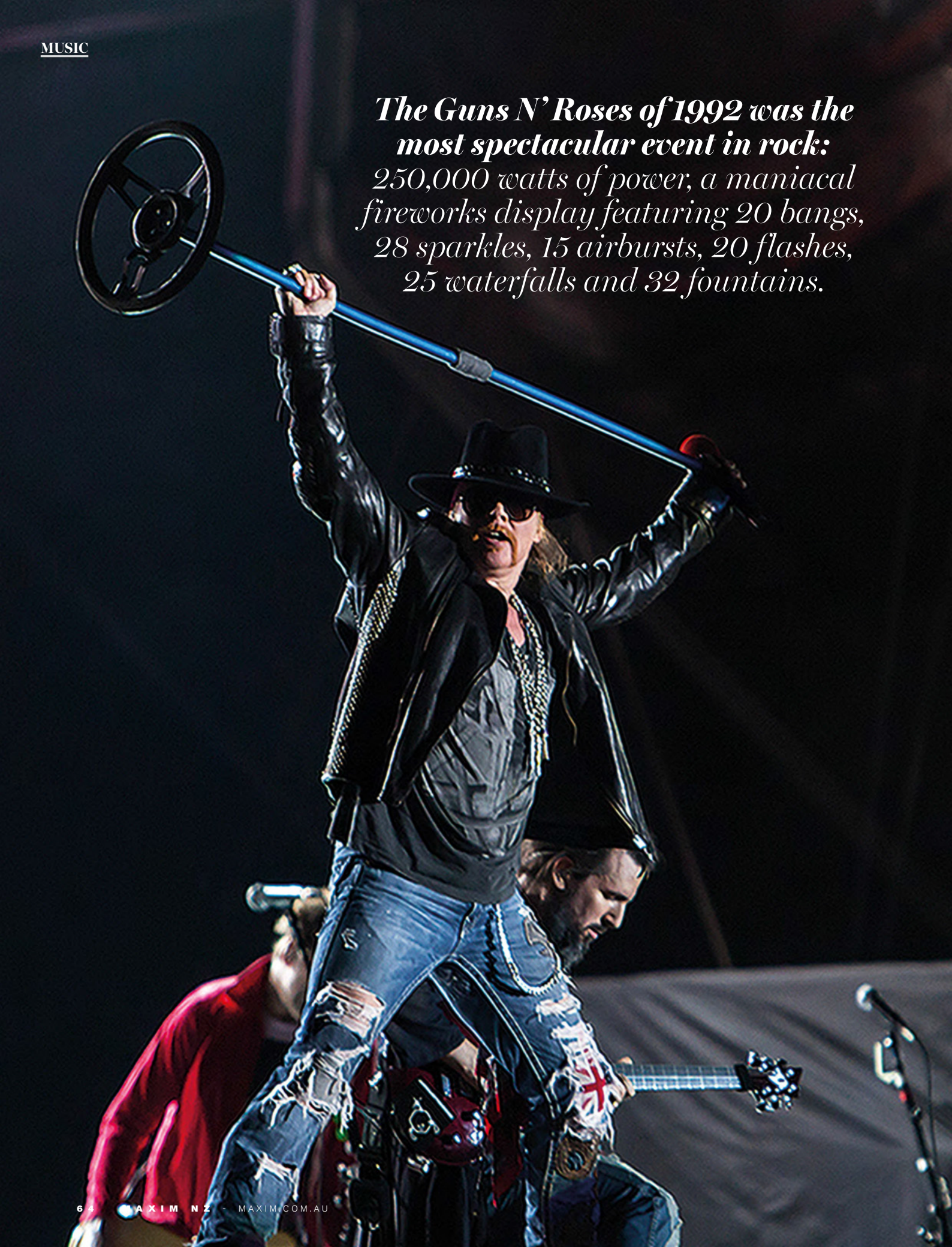
"You know what, I'm f—king out of here! ***Go f—k yourself!*** *I'm not gonna watch my family kill themselves."*

have to be rescheduled, although it was whispered amongst the crew that the latter had been cancelled on the orders of Yoda, who was 'concerned' about disruptive 'magnetic energy concentrations' around Minneapolis.

Slash began to wonder whether Axl actually felt that he was heightening the atmosphere and anticipation with his elaborate preparations. "I think it was all building up what Guns meant to him in his mind," he recalled. "And in the face of that he simply could not comprehend how what he was doing did not make complete sense to us or the rest of the world." Maybe he was onto something. It's tempting to interpret Axl entirely through his actions, to see him as some kind of ego-riddled tyrant dictating his terms of business to the world, placing himself and his needs above those of the band, the crew, the paying punters and everyone else with a stake in seeing Guns N' Roses play live. Yet run the film backwards and watch it through Axl's eyes and another reality suggests itself.

Guns N' Roses is his life's work, his greatest achievement. He has just poured into it his best songs about the rawest and most difficult moments in his life. He's immensely proud of what he has created and he wants to present it to the world in the best possible way. Ranged against him are people in record companies, promoters, managers and a million other hangers-on, plus a band with whom he used to be tight but who now spend most of their time blasted out of their brains and failing to understand why he's not having a good time, too. All of these people have agendas, be they business or personal, and they want something from him — time, money, something — and all of it in some way detracts from what he is trying to do. As a perfectionist, it drives him crazy, fuels the rage. He can see it, so why can't they? So he controls whatever he can still control. He was a sensitive, shy, angry guy, clever and misunderstood and living in circumstances very few people could imagine. All of the past-life regression and the various therapies and thinking and searching he'd done came back to one thing: his childhood; how it had been taken away from him; how his father's abuse had left him marooned emotionally in his early years.

'When they talk about Axl Rose being a screaming two-year-old, they're right,' he once said. Now he wasn't medicating that pain but trying to express it artistically. When the film was run that way, a lot of what Axl Rose did and how he did it made much more sense. There was no denying that, when it worked, the Guns N' Roses of 1992 was the most spectacular event in rock: 250,000 watts of power, a maniacal fireworks display featuring 20 bangs, 28 sparkles, 15 airbursts, 20 flashes, 25



The Guns N' Roses of 1992 was the most spectacular event in rock: *250,000 watts of power, a maniacal fireworks display featuring 20 bangs, 28 sparkles, 15 airbursts, 20 flashes, 25 waterfalls and 32 fountains.*

Slash riffing onstage in Kuala Lumpur in 2010; **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The Gunners rockin' the EXIT 2012 Music Festival in Serbia

waterfalls and 32 fountains. Axl, now relying for parts of the set on a teleprompter for his lyrics, took to changing his stage outfits on almost every other song, from spandex shorts to leather kilt to Jesus/Bukowski/Manson T-shirts, to another that read: Nobody Knows I'm a Lesbian. The highlight was always his beloved "November Rain", which he sang his broken heart out to while seated at a grand piano that rose into the middle of the stage with the piano designed to look like a motorcycle seat.

Meanwhile, back in the so-called real world, Slash was planning his wedding to Renee Suran, although the relationship, which would be made official in October 1992, when the pair were finally hitched in Marina Del Rey, was by his own admission interrupted by various dalliances, including a fairly serious involvement with Perla Ferrar, who would later become his second wife. Duff married his second wife, Linda Johnson, a month before Slash married Renee.

The subject of Slash's prenuptial agreement led to trouble soon after the Metallica dates had resumed. In San Francisco the couple got into a row about it, and Slash sloped off to score some dope from a pornstar friend of his and her boyfriend. The trio got loaded on crack and smack in Slash's hotel suite, the guitarist taking it too far and briefly OD'ing. He was taken to hospital and when he got back to the hotel, a furious Doug Goldstein sent a bottle of Jack Daniel's flying through the TV set in Slash's room.

"You know the Narcan scene in *Pulp Fiction*?" Doug Goldstein asks, referring to the scene where the unconscious Uma Thurman character is jolted back to life after a heroin overdose by the drug dealer stabbing her in the chest with a syringe full of naloxone, a prescription medicine used by paramedics in emergency situations to reverse an opioid overdose. "We carried that," he says matter-of-factly.

"I hit Slash with that on five different occasions. The fifth time that he went code blue, we were in San Francisco on the [1992] Metallica tour. I got a call at three o'clock in the morning: Slash is dead outside the elevator. I ran outside with the Narcan. Hit him in the chest. The EMT showed up, took him away, and myself and a couple of the other guys, we kicked the shit out of the drug dealers."

When Slash returned from the hospital early the next morning Doug was waiting for him in his suite, along with Earl Gabbidon, Axl's personal security guy, John Reese, the tour manager, and Slash's bodyguard, Ronnie, "who we used to call Slash on steroids. He looked just like Slash, identical, only very muscular," recalls Doug. "We're sitting there and I said, 'Slash, you're done. You don't do this anymore.'" And Ronnie his bodyguard's crying. I saw that and I'd known Ronnie since I was 17 years old, and I'd never seen him emote at all. I said, 'Slash, look at Ronnie, you're really gonna do this to your best friend?'

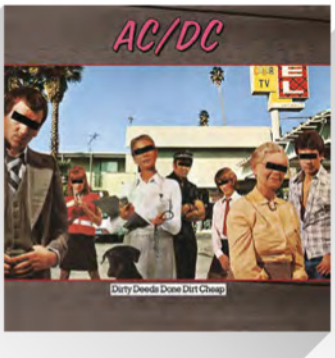
"He says, 'You know what? F—k you! F—k Ronnie! F—k all you guys. Get the f—k out of my room. I'm gonna continue to do whatever the f—k I wanna do!' And some trigger snapped in my head and I started throwing shit and by the time I left I'd done $75,000 damage to the room. And I quit. I said, 'You know what, I'm f—king out of here! Go f—k yourself! I'm not gonna watch my family kill themselves.' So I woke up my wife, put her in the car. We were off to the airport. Then John Reese went to Axl and told him what happened, and Axl said, 'Well, if Doug's gone, I'm gone.' Then he went to Slash's room and said, 'Just wanna let you know, now that Doug's quit, I'm quitting too. I suggest you try and make amends with Doug or I'm not gonna be at this Saturday's show with Metallica at the Rose Bowl.'"

Back in L.A. the next day, Slash drove down to Doug Goldstein's place in a limo. "He said, 'What's it gonna take?' I said, 'Rehab. As soon as the Metallica tour's over, you're going straight in.'" ■

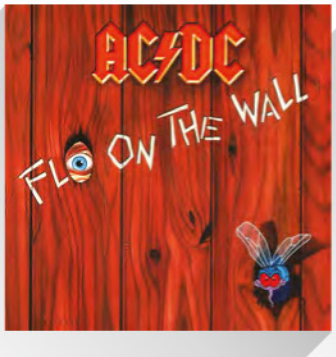
This is an edited extract from* Last of the Giants: The True Story of Guns N' Roses *by Mick Wall, published by Hachette Australia, $32.99rrp

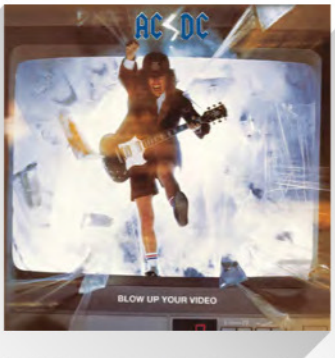
THE MAN WHO MADE AC/DC

Malcolm Young was the founder and rhythm guitarist of legendary Aussie rock band AC/DC. He was the driven one, the schemer, the planner, the behind-the-scenes man... not to mention the most unpretentious guy. In *Malcolm Young: The Man Who Made AC/DC* – the first-ever biography to focus exclusively on Malcolm — author Jeff Apter explores his life from the rough-as-guts upbringing to his very moving, star-studded funeral in November 2017...



Released on July 27, 1979, Highway To Hell was AC/DC's last album with lead singer Bon Scott, who died from alcohol poisoning on February 19, 1980. The album's title supposedly came after a reporter asked band members if they could describe what life was like being constantly on tour. Lead guitarist Angus Young replied that it was "a f—king highway to hell." The album became AC/DC's first to sell a million copies and make the U.S. Top 20. This year saw AC/DC reactivate its social media accounts, following a two-year lull, for a month-long celebration to honour the 40th anniversary of their classic masterpiece. And as we continue to celebrate this epic milestone, Jeff Apter shares this exclusive extract from his latest book, which takes us behind-the-scenes with Malcolm Young, his co-founder brother Angus, lead singer Bon Scott and the rest of the boys, as he encapsulates the highs and lows that come with being a key member of one of the biggest rock bands on the planet.





Momentum was always crucial for Malcolm Young and the band, and their U.S. tour would be the bubble in which they existed until the middle of August 1979. It was a three-and-a-bit-month-long run with very few nights off. They travelled, they played, they slept a bit and then they kept moving. Bon Scott summed up the feelings of Malcolm and the entire band when asked by Florida DJ Neal Mirsky where they currently resided. "We're not actually residents of anywhere right now," Scott explained. "Most bands live on the Virgin Islands or whatever... but we're mainly Australians... the three Australians were born in Scotland. One Englishman. And one Polish guy. We're what you might call international."

They were rock-and-roll gypsies, essentially. And while the word "bonhomie" was not bandied about too much when talked turned to the often-wary Youngs, they did form the occasional road bond. Their connection with Midwestern rockers Cheap Trick now stretched across shared gigs, tours and thousands of miles. During the 1979 tour, that connection deepened when Malcolm uncharacteristically agreed to a jam. It happened on July 7, a steamy summer's night, as the roadshow reached Sioux Falls in South Dakota, where they filled an 8000-seat venue. As Cheap Trick reached the end of their set, Malcolm, as well as Angus and Bon, joined the band for a raucous rip-and-tear through Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode". It was hardly a stellar performance – Malcolm spent most of the time trying to locate the amp into which his guitar, borrowed from singer Robin Zander, was plugged. "I couldn't figure out where my sound was coming from," he admitted afterwards. It turned out that a black scrim covered the amp, which was placed under the drum riser. Even when jamming, Malcolm was driven to get it right. But Malcolm's gesture was more important than the end result. He didn't suffer fools and he didn't jump on stage with just anyone. He wouldn't jam with another band for 24 years — and that band would be none other than The Rolling Stones.

A few weeks later, *Highway to Hell* was finally released. Looking back, Malcolm came to accept that moving on from Vanda and Young — the compromise he had so reluctantly agreed to — proved to be a lifeline for the band. "That was a definitive change for AC/DC," he later said of *Highway to Hell*. "Atlantic Records in America were unhappy because they couldn't get the band on the radio, and they were desperate for us to come up with something more accessible. We'd had our own way for a few albums so we figured, let's give them what they want and keep everyone happy." There was one big problem, though: the album title. Atlantic hated it, and feared a backlash in conservative U.S. markets. But Malcolm refused to budge; one compromise per album was more than enough. According to Malcolm, "If certain people had got their way, though, it wouldn't have been called *Highway to Hell*, because the bible belt was very strong in America at the time, and they made a fuss once the record came out. But even though we were under pressure, we stuck to our guns."

Angus agreed with his brother. As far as he was concerned, after all their globetrotting, there was no more apt name for the record, as he told *Guitar World* magazine. "You crawl off the bus at four o'clock in the morning, and some journalist's doing a story and he says, 'What would you call an AC/DC tour?' Well, it was a highway to hell. It really was. When you're sleeping with the singer's socks two inches from your nose, that's pretty close to hell." Not only did Malcolm get his way, but a promotional poster was created using the album's front cover, which became an iconic work of AC/DC art. Devil's horns protruded from the cap of a snarling Angus, while the others in the band were either chuckling (Bon), scowling (Malcolm) or caught somewhere in between (Williams and Rudd). "AC/DC," the poster announced, "burning a Highway to Hell."

The album became their first to crack the U.S. Top 100, peaking at number 17 on November 10, 1979, during a pretty fertile time commercially for rock bands, with albums from Foreigner (*Head Games*), Led Zeppelin (*In Through the Out Door*) and The Knack (*Get the Knack*) all charting strongly in the U.S. (At time of writing, *Highway to Hell*'s sales sit at over seven million, a handy return on Atlantic's investment, which was more substantial for *Highway to Hell* due to the change of producer.) In the U.K., while the album became a hit, peaking at number 8 and charting for 40 weeks, a sector of the British press still couldn't bring themselves to treat AC/DC seriously. "The greatest album ever made," declared a headline in *NME*, under which was printed, in much smaller type, "(in Australia)". If Malcolm needed further proof that they were a band of the people and not of the critics, there it was. When Bon Scott sat down with a writer from the *Record Mirror*, he took the time to reflect on their slow climb in the U.S.. "We're beginning to make an impact... at last, [but] I reckon we'll still have to push a bit harder to get to the top of the hill." In short, more touring.

With their star rising globally, AC/DC were now being handpicked for big shows in the U.K. and Europe — and suddenly they were being billed as "guest stars", rather than just another name in a long list of acts. On August 18, 1979 they made their "guest star" debut at Wembley Arena, as part of a huge event — the return of The Who, playing their biggest show since the demise of their drummer Keith "The Loon" Moon, dead from an overdose of prescription drugs at the age of 32. Also on the oddly balanced bill were punk act The Stranglers and American singer/guitarist Nils Lofgren. The audience was, by some reports, as large as 80,000, certainly the biggest that Malcolm and the band had ever fronted. "Only AC/DC really manage[s] to move the audience," reported Harry Doherty, writing for *Melody Maker*. "The audience left no doubt as to their partiality for AC/DC. This could be just the break the band needed to finally push their point home to Britain."

But it was hard work for the group. As they tore into "Whole Lotta Rosie", the PA suddenly cut out, which elicited a rowdy response from the crowd

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeff Apter is the author of over 20 music biographies, many of them bestsellers. His subjects include Johnny O'Keefe, Keith Urban, John Farnham, the Bee Gees, the Finn brothers and Angus Young of AC/DC. Jeff was on staff at *Rolling Stone* magazine for several years and has written about legends such as Aretha Franklin, Patti Smith, Robbie Robertson, Bob Dylan, Chrissie Hynde and Lucinda Williams. In 2015, he worked on the Helpmann award – nominated live show *A State of Grace: The Music of Jeff and Tim Buckley*. Away from music, Jeff has also worked on books with soldiers and diplomats and sports greats such as Michael Slater and Tim Cahill. He lives in Wollongong, NSW, with his wife, two children, a cat that's so damned cool it needs no name, and a very blue dog named Neela. www.jeffapter.com.au

ABOVE: AC/DC on their *Black Ice* World Tour, June 2009, in Helsinki, Finland; LEFT: The boys rocking Wembley, London in 1979

— it seemed that many were there just to see AC/DC, a slap in the face for the resurrected The Who. The band continued playing, but they could barely be heard beyond the first few rows. "Turn the f—king thing on!" screamed one punter. The PA finally roared back into life during "Rocker", the crowd yelled its approval and a very pissed-off AC/DC powered on to a huge finale. That malfunction launched a juicy rumour: were AC/DC the victims of sabotage? Could an envious headliner's crew be to blame? The truth was never disclosed. Despite the hitch, "they were awesome", according to The Stranglers' J.J. Burnel. "And it was solid packed." After their set, Bon Scott sat down with the band's former roadie, Tana Douglas, who was working elsewhere that day at Wembley, and admitted that he was feeling much older than his 33 years.

A French film crew began trailing the band in December, prior to a sold-out show at the Pavilion, shooting footage for the concert film *Let There Be Rock*, which would surface in 1980. Filmmakers Eric Dionysius and Eric Mistler provided an unusually candid portrait of Malcolm and Angus — "the notorious Young brothers", grinned Angus. How's Malcolm as a brother? he was asked. "Good, fine, upstanding. Likes a drink. And I can look him in the eye." The two were filmed backstage, ciggies and guitars in hand. Swathed in smoke, the pair appeared lost in their pre-show tuning, oblivious to the world around them — camera crew, eager audience, the lot. There was a show to play; it was time to get to work.

Despite the usual whiff of superiority that elder sibling Malcolm exhibited towards his 'kid' brother — and Angus would always be the kid, no matter how old he actually was — Malcolm was beginning to pay Angus due credit. "Sometimes," Malcolm told a reporter, "because of the volume on stage, you don't hear the stuff Angus is doing solo-wise... He's a hot player. One day they'll see it in their entirety and go, 'F—k, he's one of the best of them all.' And that'll be true." In a sequence from *Let There Be Rock* that would prove tragically prophetic, a cameraman followed Bon as he walked along a street in Paris. "I'm a special drunkard," Bon laughed, when asked why the others in the band referred to him as "special". "I drink too much." Did he consider himself a star? "No," Bon chuckled. "But I see stars sometimes."

Malcolm had his own "solo" sequence in the film, where he got to indulge his love of soccer. Decked out in what looks like an Aberdeen FC strip, he booted a ball around an empty paddock, celebrated a "goal' with a drink and then fell into the embrace of his girlfriend, O'linda, who was looking on. She was an employee at Alberts and a close friend of Fifa Riccabono, a long-time employee at Alberts (and eventually its CEO), and a close confidante of the band. O'linda was Malcolm's first serious girlfriend in years; so serious, in fact, that they'd marry just prior to Christmas 1979, and would remain wed for the rest of his life. Angus, too, was in a serious relationship, with a tall blonde Dutchwoman named Ellen, who towered over him protectively whenever they were seen together. They'd wed in February 1980. The "notorious Young brothers"

were settling down. But not so Bon Scott. He'd overindulged a few times during gigs on their most recent U.S. visit — boozing was fine after, but not during, a show — and was socialising with lively characters such as Pete Way from the British band UFO, a drinking buddy of Scott's. The two bands had toured together in the States. "Bon was brilliant," said Way. "You'd see him first thing in the morning, and he'd been with the barmaid or something, and he'd go, 'Had a good workout last night.' He'd get out of the elevator, he'd clap his hands and he'd say, 'Large Jack Daniels.'"

LEFT: The band (from left to right) Malcolm Young, Phil Rudd, Angus Young, Cliff Williams and Bon Scott pose for a photo shoot in London in 1979; BELOW: Bon Scott and Angus Young backstage in Atlanta, Georgia in 1978

Ever since the band had begun working with Atlantic in the U.S. people had whispered in Malcolm's ear that Bon wasn't right for the band: he was too wild, he was too ragged, he screamed too much. Someone even suggested that Malcolm should replace him with David Coverdale from the metal band Whitesnake (who Malcolm dismissed as a "pop singer"). And, by his own admission, Scott was now starting to entertain the notion of recording a solo album, ideally with some of the southern rockers who he'd befriended in the U.S.. He wasn't leaving the band; he just wanted to stretch his musical wings a bit. But Malcolm rejected any notion of sacking Scott. No f—king way that was going to happen – he and Scott had grown very tight since he joined the band. Bon stayed.

The rest of 1979 was spent in motion, with a U.S. tour followed by dates in the U.K. and Europe. Just before heading back to Australia for Christmas, Scott seemed to be in a more upbeat mood than he had been at Wembley a few months earlier. "I'm 33," he told a reporter, "[but] you're never too old to rock and roll." Back in Sydney he reconnected with family and friends, even jumping on stage at the suburban Sydney venue The Family Inn, jamming Chuck Berry's "Back in the USA" with the band Swanee, whose singer, John Swan, was a fellow expat Scot who also didn't mind a tipple. Then there was a whistlestop AC/DC tour of France for a week in January, with gigs in Poitiers, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Rouen, Nantes, Brest and Le Mans, followed by a handful of shows back in the U.K..

The *Highway to Hell* LP was now well represented in the band's set list; they played "Shot Down in Flames", "Highway to Hell" and "Girls Got Rhythm", along with the usual standards. There was also another appearance on *Top of the Pops*, rocking "Touch Too Much" on February 7, followed by a spot on a Spanish TV show two days later. The translated version of the intro from Spanish host Silvia Tortosa laid it on the line: "Today on *TV Applauso*, we receive a new group in Spain: AC/DC. They're Australian and are considered one of the best rock bands of the last generation... Today, for the first time in Spain, AC/DC!" But Bon didn't look his best; he seemed tired, pale, drained. The seated audience, an odd assortment of young and old Spaniards, clapped politely after the band played "Girls Got Rhythm".

A few days later, Bon returned to the Hammersmith Odeon to cheer on his buddies in UFO when they staged a three-night run at a favourite venue of AC/DC's. Members of UFO would subsequently admit that heroin was among their after-show indulgences, and AC/DC's manager Peter Mensch was understandably worried about the impact this toxic environment would have on Scott. But Bon was his own man — and no stranger to drugs, of course. As for Malcolm, he may have considered Bon a brother, but he was in no position to question the guy's lifestyle choices, even if there were some incidents that upset him, such as the time Bon had invited Rose Tattoo's Mick Cocks onto the tour bus, even though Malcolm had made it well known he wasn't a fan of the hard-living guitarist. But Malcolm was hardly a saint himself — he loved a drink and a smoke and a big night; he'd be a hypocrite to even suggest some sort of intervention. And would Bon have listened to him anyway?

If there was one thing bugging Malcolm, it was that he felt Bon wasn't receiving due credit for his rare, funny skill with lyrics and his amazing stage presence. The man was the living embodiment of swagger, one of the best frontmen of his generation. George Young had been spot-on five years before when he'd observed that hiring Bon had transformed AC/DC into a real rock-and-roll band. And as far as Malcolm was concerned, Bon still wasn't getting "the recognition due to him". Maybe the next record would change all that.

Malcolm's thoughts were soon elsewhere: by early 1980, he was focused on the next album. *Highway to Hell* had given them a firm foothold in America, and they were now making a reasonable living, so the time was right to capitalise on the momentum. Mutt Lange was locked in to produce; as soon as a bunch of new songs were in decent shape, they would be ready to roll. News had come through from the U.S. that *Highway to Hell* had just tipped over the one million sales mark, so the future couldn't have been brighter. It was a platinum record — their first.

On February 15, Malcolm and Angus got together to work in a London rehearsal space, tinkering with instrumental sketches that would become the songs "Have a Drink on Me" and "Let Me Put My Love Into You". Bon dropped in unannounced. The first thing that struck Malcolm was that Bon was in good shape. As he'd say later, "He looked fantastic; he was looking after himself."

"Do you mind if I play the drums?" Bon said, motioning towards a kit in the corner. It was a request with a bit of a backstory; when Scott had first met the band in 1974, he'd actually asked if he could be their drummer. "So when do we get started?" Scott asked, as he whacked away at the drums.

"We're just about ready for you, Bon," Malcolm told him.

"Maybe next week sometime." With that, Bon said goodbye and left. Malcolm would never see him again. ■

THIS IS AN EDITED EXTRACT FROM* MALCOLM YOUNG: THE MAN WHO MADE AC/DC *BY JEFF APTER, PUBLISHED BY ALLEN & UNWIN, RRP $32.99,

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PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER

With May being International Masturbation Month, our resident sexpert takes a look at the benefits of being a full-blown wanker...

By VANESSA DE LARGIE

May has "cum", which not only means 31 days of celebrating self love, but also a month when you're encouraged to have a wank for a while. The idea of International Masturbation Month was conceived back in the mid-'90s by Good Vibrations, in honour of public health administrator, Joycelyn Elders who was sacked by then U.S. President Bill Clinton for suggesting that masturbation should be part of sex education in schools.

International Masturbation Day, which is classily referred to as "Wankers Day" by Aussies and Brits, is held annually on May 28 and celebrates your goddamn right to have a diddle. But what are the perks of being a wanker? Here, I thought I'd knock the top off it and fill you in.

IT REDUCES THE RISK OF PROSTATE CANCER

A recent study, conducted by Harvard University and published in The Journal of European Urology found that men who orgasm 21 times per month, or more, may reduce their risk of prostate cancer by up to a third. The research also shows a significant reduction in prostate cancer in men who fap regularly. According to scientists, ejaculation clears the prostate of cancer-causing carcinogens.

IT MAY HELP YOU LIVE LONGER

Looking to add a few extra years to your lifespan? Well, the good news is it can all be done with one hand. According to research by Dr. Michael Roizen at the Wellness Institute, blokes who ejaculate at least once a day live four years longer than those who don't. And if you can manage to pump out two a day you'll add an extra eight years to your life! It's always handy to have some inspiration in the second round.

IT'S A POSSIBLE CURE FOR INSOMNIA

We've all had those nights where we toss and turn but struggle to switch off. Well, instead of reaching for your bottle of sleeping pills, why not try masturbating first? Masturbation lowers blood pressure and increases the release of endorphins in the body. When a man

MEN who orgasm 21 times per month, or more, may reduce their risk of prostate cancer by up to a third.

- THE JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN UROLOGY -

ejaculates he releases a chemical called Prolactin. It is Prolactin that makes men tired after sex.

BIGGER AND STRONGER ERECTIONS

There is nothing more attractive to a woman than a strong erection (insert laughter here). But seriously, all women seek virile men. According to a study carried out by the *American Journal of Medicine*, infrequent sexual activity actually heightens the risk of erectile dysfunction. The research suggests that regular sexual activities helps to preserve male potency. As the old adage goes: If you don't use it, you'll lose it.

IT PUTS YOU IN A BETTER MOOD

Masturbating releases all those feel-good chemicals into the bloodstream. "An orgasm is the biggest non-drug blast of dopamine available," says American sexologist, Gloria Brame. "A brain scan of someone having an orgasm looks like a heroin addict's."

So, as you can see, science shows us that there are numerous benefits to being a wicked wanker. Please be sure to celebrate your wankery unashamedly throughout the rest of May. We encourage it. Onwards and upwards, gentlemen.■

Vanessa de Largie *is a sex columnist and freelance journalist based in Melbourne*

It's all ABOUT THE BASS

Meet model, actress, stuntwoman, bikini comp winner and big adrenaline junkie **KASEY BASS**...

Photographed by ROCKY BACHELOR
Interview by PARIS RAINE

Give us a little background about yourself and life story so far, Kasey?
I'm a professional model and actress and a single mum of five young kids! I've walked every major US fashion week and I adore the fashion world. I'm currently Miss Bikini Sky Fitness with Miss Bikini US, the country's biggest bikini competition. I'm also a stunt actress and a big adrenaline junkie.

How would you describe yourself?
I'm fun, relentless, adventurous, an artist and a people person.

What do you love most about yourself?
I bring the party and love being surrounded by beautiful energy.

What is one of your weird quirks?
I'm a major nerd and have a PhD in literature. I love researching basically anything.

What is the first things you do when you get up in the morning?
I pray and thank God for my family and my life. I'm a two-time cancer survivor – every second is precious.

Amen to that! So, what words do you live by?
We only have now.

What's the first thing you notice when it comes to the opposite gender?
I notice confidence and kindness, most of all. I appreciate someone who is athletic, like I am.

"I bring the party and love being surrounded by beautiful energy."

"I'm fun, relentless, adventurous, an artist and a people person."

What's the most attractive quality in a man?
A man who loves people and tries to build others up is incredibly sexy to me.

What impresses you on a first date?
I notice if they're willing to be real with me – real questions, real thoughts, real happiness about life.

What advice would you give a man?
Be happy in yourself first and allow a partner to see that true joy in being alive. Sharing that is intoxicating.

Describe your ideal partner.
He is willing to see life as a journey we're on together and something we're figuring out together.

What's your guilty pleasure?
Dark chocolate and whisky.

Lastly, what is something new happening in your life right now?
I'm acting in several projects filming soon, including *The Sword of Alentius*, *Medusa*, *The Bridge*, *The Haul Across Aswan* and a few others I can't talk about yet. Look out for *Reina of the West*, *Rent a Room*, *Between the Lies*, *Mr. Patrick* and *Accidental Texan*. I'm also walking in Texas Swim Week, Las Vegas Swim Week, Swim & Fashion Week Experience, Miami Swim Week, Asian New York Fashion Week and New York Fashion Week. ■

"A man who loves people and tries to build others up is ***incredibly sexy*** *to me."*

STATUS UPDATE

NAME:
Kasey Bass

BORN:
January 26

HOMETOWN:
Houston, Texas USA

INSTAGRAM:
@kaseybassofficial &
@kaseybasstunts

Hannah Rose Widmer

The MAXIM Australia/NZ *Women of the World Official 2024 Calendar* is the perfect gift for you and your mates. Featuring 13 gorgeous international models, this month we give you awesome May beauty Hannah...

STATUS UPDATE

LIVES
Chicago

BIRTHDAY
February 13

FIVE WORD SELF DESCRIPTION
"Non-traditional, authentic, passionate, independent, vulnerable."

LIFE MOTTO
"I do not at all understand the mystery of grace – only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us."- Anne Lamott

INSTAGRAM
@hannah.r.widmer

The *MAXIM Australia/NZ Women of the World Official 2024 Calendar* is available in newsagents RRP $19.95

TITUS O'REILY

The Aussie writer, broadcaster, comedian and sports satirist chats about his last day on Earth...

Interview by SANTI PINTADO

Have you ever felt like you've died onstage during one of your stand-up gigs?
I did a gig at a lunch for a footy club and I was on last. The lunch went long, everyone got drunk and then people had to go. By the time I got up to speak there were three people left in the audience. One was passed out, another on their phone and the last guy got up as I started to have a smoke outside.

Speaking of death, how do you want to leave this world?
I would like to go out doing some heroic deed that saved a lot of lives, but it's probably going to be liver disease.

*"Don't have faith in yourself, have faith in **how bad** other people are."*

Do you have any deathbed confessions?
Every time someone said, "Are you listening to me?" I wasn't.

What's your last meal?
Whisky. It makes every moment better.

Are you going to Heaven or Hell?
According to Israel Folau I'm going to Hell on numerous counts. And given all the fornicators and drunkards that are going to be there, I'm looking forward to it.

What do you say to the Devil when you get there?
"Do you have Foxtel?"

What quality advice will you take to the grave with you?
Don't have faith in yourself, have faith in how bad other people are.

During your time on Earth, what was the greatest moment in sport?
Bernard Tomic retiring from a match, citing the heat, when it was 24 degrees.

What's your greatest achievement during your time on Earth?
I once threw a bit of paper across the office and landed it in the bin with the whole office watching.

Name one thing you're glad you'll never have to do again.
School. I got nothing out of it except my heaps good grasp of English.

What are your friends saying over your casket?
"Thank god that's over."

What or who would you like to be reincarnated as?
An Australian Senator. No other job pays so well but delivers so little.

What's written on your tombstone?
"This Tombstone intentionally left blank."

Got any last words?
Sorry to have bothered you. ■

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